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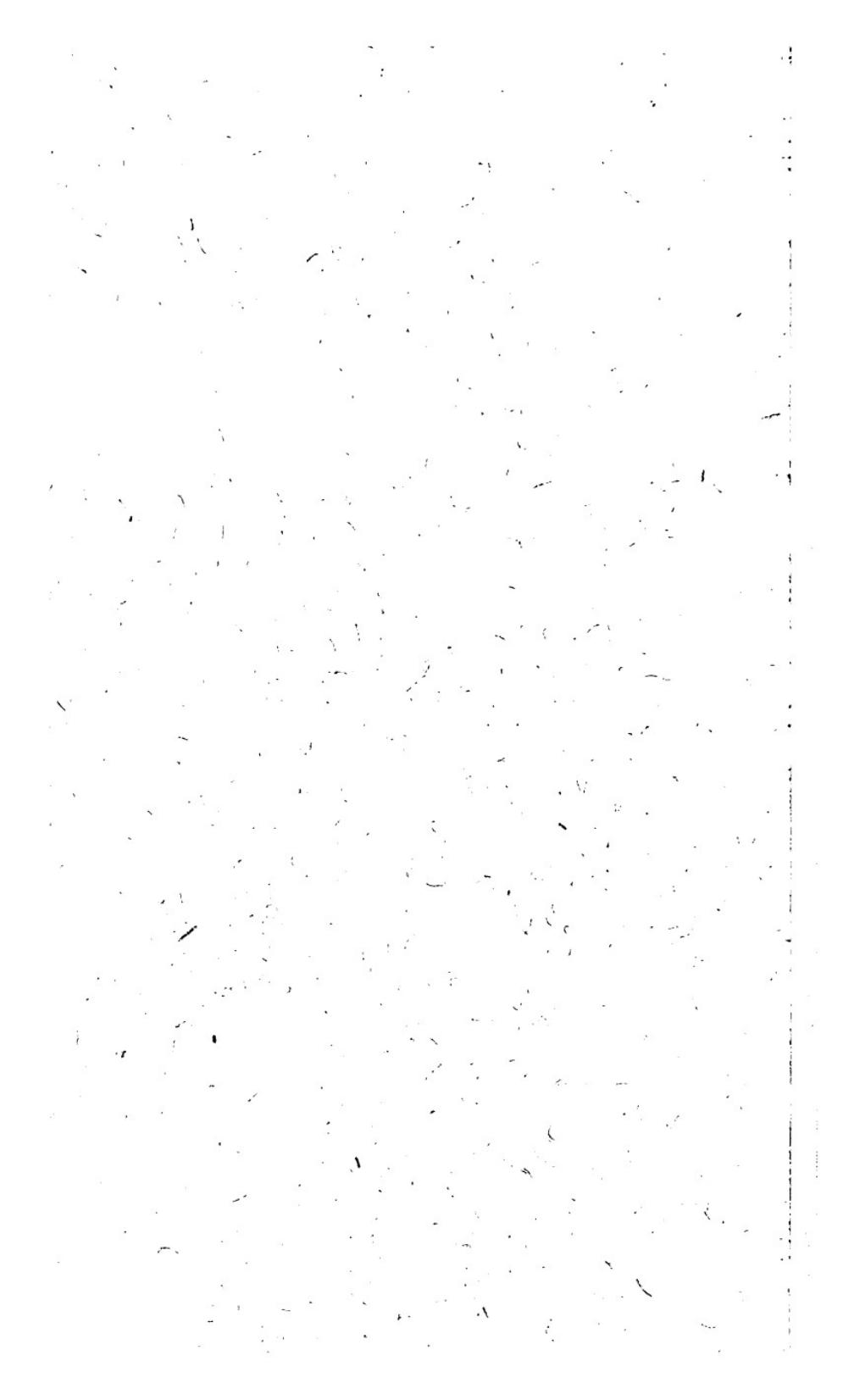
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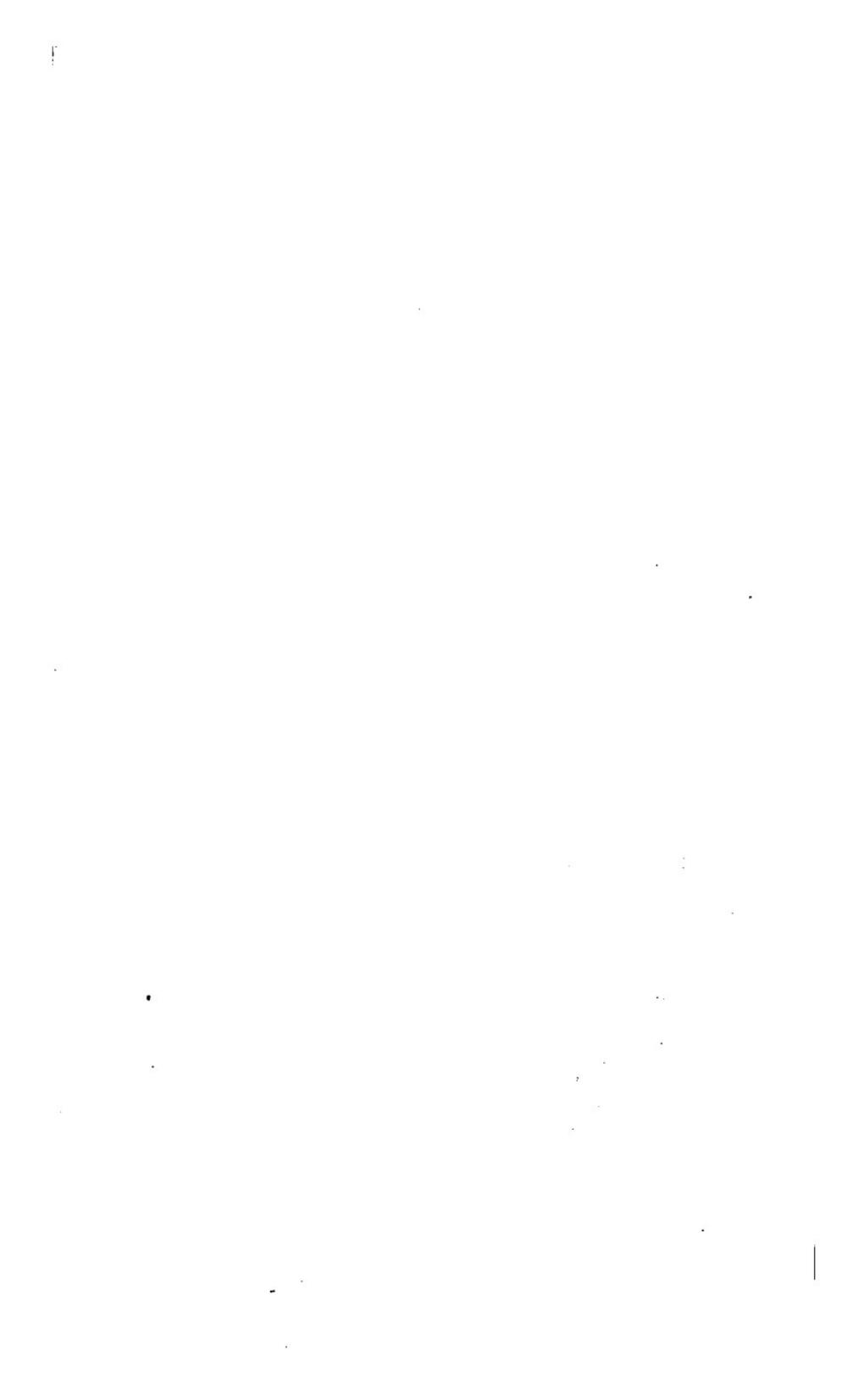
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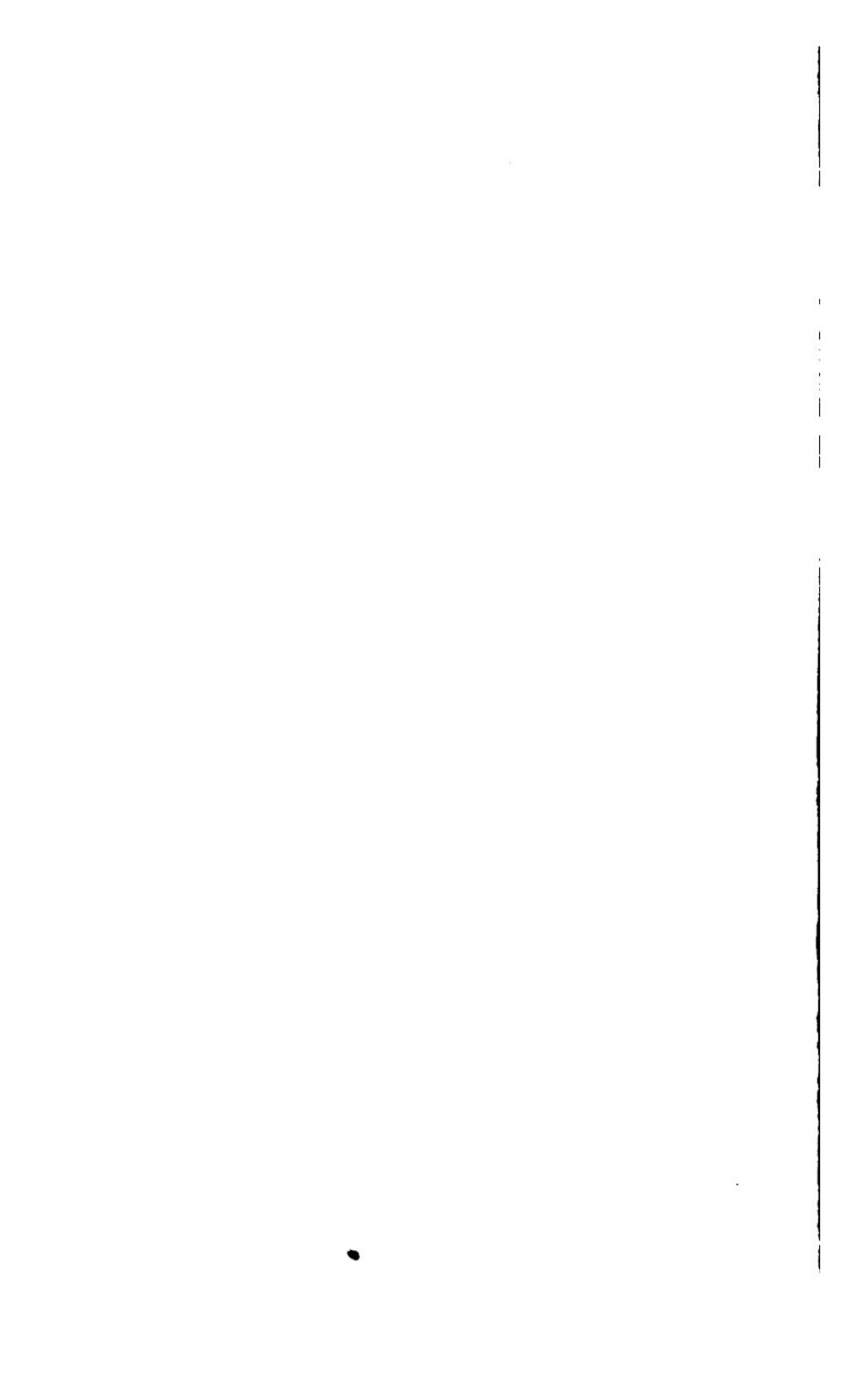
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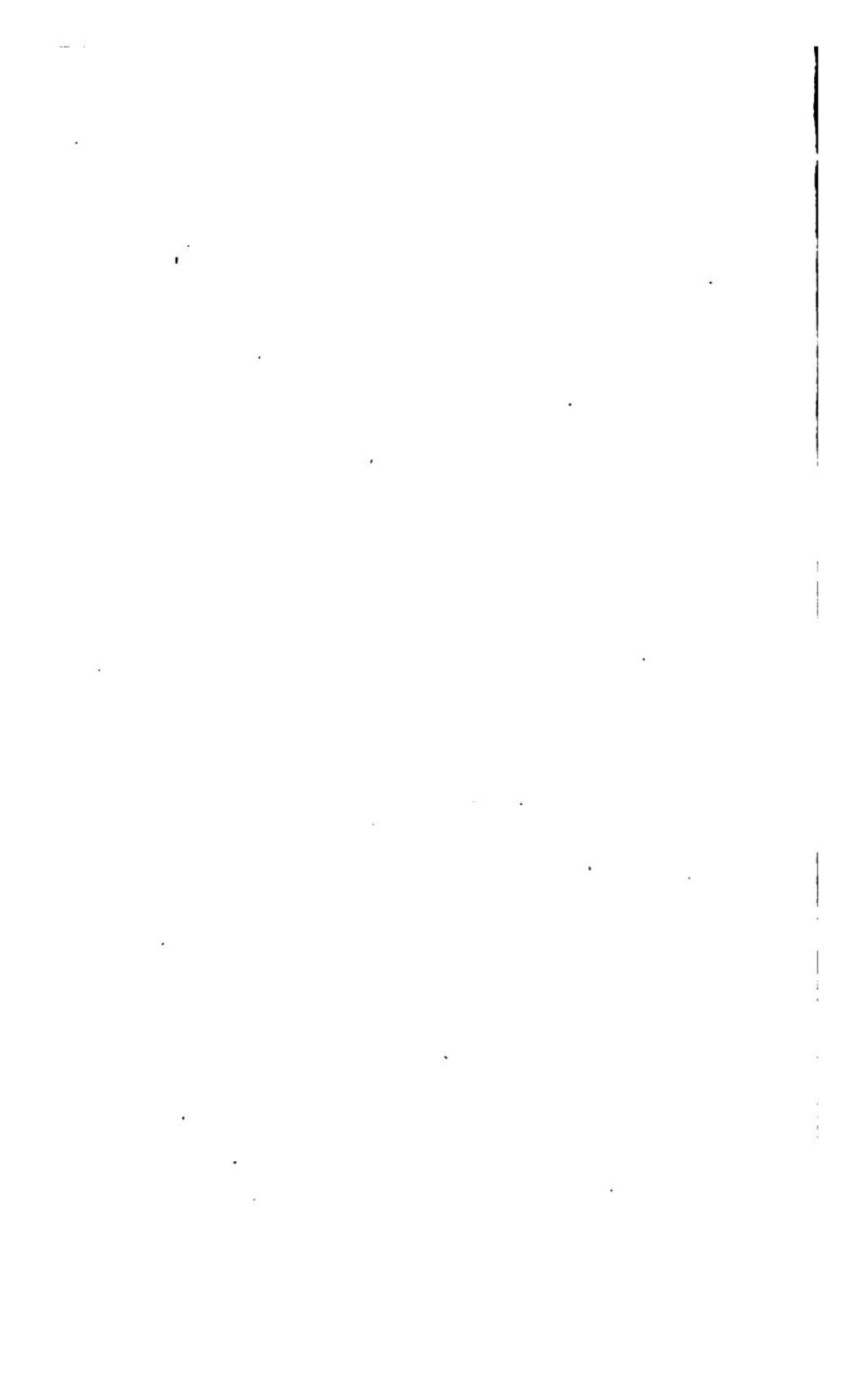


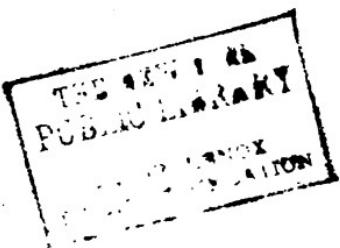




BOHN'S EXTRA VOLUME.

**COUNT ANTHONY HAMILTON'S
FAIRY TALES AND ROMANCES.**





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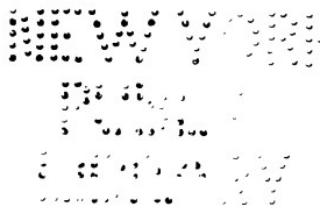
WRITTEN

BY COUNT ANTHONY HAMILTON,

AUTHOR OF THE "MEMOIRS OF GRAMMONT."

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

By M. LEWIS, H. T. RYDE, AND C. KENNEY.



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C. W. H.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present amusing series of Tales, written by the lively and ingenious author of the Memoirs of Count Grammont, are so highly esteemed on the Continent, and have been so frequently recommended to the attention of the publisher, that he has been induced to present them to his subscribers in an English dress.

The first tale in the volume has already acquired some popularity in this country by the spirited version of the celebrated Monk Lewis, but the others have never before been translated.

The design of these Tales is intimated in the biographical sketch of Count Hamilton, prefixed to the Standard Library edition of his Grammont. They appear to have been called forth by the extravagant, and, as the author thought, undeserved praise which was showered upon Galland's then recent version of the Arabian Nights, as well in the gay as in the literary circles of the Court of Louis Quatorze. His wit and raillery were levelled unsparingly at the coteries of Versailles and St. Germain, for their enthusiastic admiration of such impossible and ridiculous adventures. His gibes were met on the part of Galland's admirers by a challenge to Hamilton to do as well, which he accepted, and at intervals produced the tales before us. Those who are familiar with the Arabian

Nights, or any other of the extravagant fictions of the East, or have read the Fairy Tales of the Countess D'Anois, or have any notion of the ponderous and absurd Classical Romances of Madame Scuderi and her school, will be best able to appreciate the sprightly banter and facetious sarcasm of the elegant and accomplished author.

It has been deemed advisable to place this volume in the detached series of the Standard Library, as, however graceful and witty may be the writings of Count Hamilton, they are all, more especially these tales, strongly spiced with the leaven of the age.

H. G. B.

August, 1849.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE FOUR FACARDINS	1
ZENEYDA	277
THE STORY OF MAY-FLOWER	368
THE RAM	445
THE ENCHANTER FAUSTUS	544

COUNT HAMILTON'S TALES.

THE FOUR FACARDINS.

An Arabian Tale.

PART I.

—“ Oh ! wonderful, wonderful, and again most wonderful wonderful, and yet again wonderful, and after that out of all whooping.”—*As YOU LIKE IT.*

At the court of Schahriar, (that monarch, whose method of preserving his honour by cutting his wife's head off, has rendered him so justly celebrated throughout the world,) was educated the heir of the small principality of Trebizonde. At an early age he departed in search of adventures ; and having consumed two years in this pursuit, he unexpectedly returned to the capital of India. Hearing of his arrival, the sultan was desirous to know the history of his travels. In consequence, one evening the prince was ordered to attend the monarch, whom he found already in his bed-chamber ; the fair and wise Scherazade reposed by his side, and her sister Dinarzade occupied as usual a snug little camp-bed in the corner. This latter was not the person least anxious to hear the prince's history ; she had perceived, that he was young and handsome, and had even been kind enough to let him know, that she thought him so. To her great surprise he had taken no notice of her hints, and, anxious to know the reason of his backwardness, she

waited for his narrative with impatience. At the sultan's request he began it in the following words :—

HISTORY OF THE PRINCE OF TREBIZONDE.

It is not to the ears of your most august and sublime majesty, that fictitious tales should be related. For my own part, valuing myself upon the most scrupulous veracity, I shall follow your beautiful sultana's example, and inform you of adventures no less true, than they would appear fabulous from any other lips than mine.

I shall only mention my birth so far as relates to my mother's strange superstition, that the happiness or misfortunes of my life would depend upon my name. Accordingly, not finding one to her taste among those adopted by my ancestors, she was on the point of consulting the oracle of Bactria, when her favourite parrot, for whom she had a great regard, took it into his head to repeat "Facardin," several times. This was enough to fix her irresolution, and she determined to honour me with this illustrious appellation. I proceed to that period of my life, which is remarkable for the adventures about to have the happiness of being related to your majesty.

I quitted your court some days before the revolution, which took place on account of your first Sultana. When the news reached me, I had still two days' journey to perform, before I could reach my own dominions ; and I must take the liberty to say, that I then disapproved your leaving court no less, than I have disapproved your conduct since your return. In my opinion you had better not have married again at all, than have secured your wife's fidelity by not giving her time to be unfaithful ; that is to say, by beheading her on the morning after her nuptials.

I stayed at Trebizonde no longer than was necessary to

restrain my vassals within the limits of their obedience ; for they were on the point of rebelling against your edict, by which it was supposed, that all other sovereigns would regulate their conduct. I assured my subjects, that I had not the least design to introduce the fashion at Trebizonde. Then having purchased the list of tournaments for the present year, as also a description of the most dangerous adventures to be met with throughout the universe, I set out with the design of rendering my singular name as celebrated as it appears uncommon. Without vanity I may venture to say, that I have not quite failed in the attempt.

My preparations were quite different from those made by adventurers in general : instead of a squire to carry my armour and relate my exploits, I took with me a secretary to write them down ; and never had poor secretary so much to do !

Fortune favoured me, wherever I went. No beauty could resist the graces of my person, and no hero the valour of my arm. However, I soon grew tired of being always beloved without ever loving ; and if luckily I had not found every day some monster to kill or enchantment to destroy, I know not what I must have done for amusement. My secretary, who was naturally a man of sense, and who was much improved by living in my society, endeavoured to comfort me by demonstrating, that there were misfortunes in life, even greater than those of which I complained.

“ Heaven grant,” said he, “ that the happy Facardin never may know them, and that fortune may guide his steps, far from the fertile plains and dangerous climates of Astracan ! ”

It was mid-day, and we found ourselves in the midst of a thick and pleasant forest. I was on the point of selecting some shady tree, beneath whose boughs I could seat myself to hear at my ease my secretary’s account of this same Astracan, when we perceived two strangers advancing towards us, mounted

on camels. The first attracted my attention, as well by his appearance as by the action which he performed, as soon as he came near us. His figure was the most noble and elegant that I ever had beheld ; and his features were so beautiful, that although accustomed to see me every day, my secretary could not forbear expressing his surprise and admiration. We had full time to examine him ; for, stopping his camel opposite to us whom he did not observe, he took his helmet from the hands of his attendant ; but instead of putting it on, as I expected, he sighed several times, and fixed his eyes tenderly upon a bird sparkling with gold and diamonds, which I took for an eagle, and whose extended wings overshadowed the helmet. After contemplating this image some time, he kissed it respectfully ; then returning the casque to his squire, he passed on, still plunged in the same profound reverie, which had prevented his observing us.

It was then that I reflected upon the words of my secretary : I could not but own, that a man really in love must be extremely discomposed at finding in his way such a rival as this stranger. I could not resist my curiosity to know his name; and my secretary having stopped the squire to ask the question, returned in dismay to inform me that he was called Facardin.

"Just heavens!" cried I, in astonishment—"Facardin?"

At this exclamation, the handsome knight thinking that I had called him, turned his camel's head, and inquired my business.

"I would only ask," said I, "whether is it possible that your name should be Facardin?"

"It is but too true," he replied. "Would to heaven that it were not, since I attribute to a secret fatality attached to this villainous name the greatest part of my misfortunes."

"May I inquire," demanded I, "what those misfortunes are?"

" You shall know," answered he, very politely. " I should be the most constant man upon earth, if I were not as unfortunate in love, as for some time past my heart has been susceptible. Still I cannot complain that my mistresses have deceived me, for none has ever pretended to love me. It is true—the most adorable of mortals—the only woman who ever beheld me without aversion—seemed for a moment to return my passion; but, alas! she only proved her regard by putting me to a trial, the remembrance of which makes my blood run cold. But to return to what I was saying, it is impossible that, although I want all other recommendations, my assiduity, attention, and complaisance should be unsuccessful everywhere, if this ridiculous name did not bring me bad luck."

" How," said I, " can a man like you have offered his heart in vain; and can a person of so much sense as you seem to possess, imagine that your name is the cause of your rejection?"

" It is the plain truth," continued he; " to convince you of it I need only relate my adventures; but, doubtless, you must have more weighty employment than listening to the history of my disappointments."

I assured him that just then I had nothing better to do; and to give him some little hope that his fortune would change, I addressed him as follows:—

" Be assured," said I, " noble stranger, that a name is only lucky or unlucky, according to the fortunes of the person who bears it. I know not from what country you come; but to judge by the wonders which you relate of their rigour and cruelty, the fair ones who inhabit it can be no other than wild cats. I am called Facardin as well as yourself; but to show you how little the name signifies, know, though I have met with a hundred beauties in my travels, some of whom were of the first distinction, none of them ever cost me more than a

single sigh. My secretary shall give you the list of them, with their address. Pay them a visit, and when we meet again you will tell a very different story."

"Alas!" replied the unknown, "though you found them lambs, to me they will prove tigresses. In every woman whom I address, never have I failed to excite disgust, the matron of Mount Atlas excepted, who must have excited disgust herself in hearts the least dainty and most susceptible. Listen to me for a few minutes, and you will be convinced of the truth of this assertion."

We now quitted our camels, and while our attendants gathered dates and pomegranates for our refreshment, we chose in the thickest part of the forest a convenient place to repose. The stranger then addressed me as follows:—

THE HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF MOUNT ATLAS;

I have vowed never to discover myself, so long as my heart shall remain thus ridiculously susceptible of first impressions, and my person thus universally scorned even by those very damsels who to all others are very far from being cruel. You must excuse, therefore, the concealment of my birth; neither will I mention the kingdom, which I quitted with the design of signalising myself by some remarkable action. Suffice it to say, that my first object was probably the same, which has brought yourself and so many other adventurers into the field—I mean, the conquest of Moussellina the Serious, heiress of Astracan. But although, as you already must know either by experience or by report, she is the most perfect of mortals, I undertook this adventure, less from curiosity to behold, or wish to possess her, than from ambition to perform a task so difficult—I may say, indeed, so impossible. Glory was then my

heart's only passion. On the subject of love I felt the most absolute indifference.

As yet I have met with no more than two adventures which can merit your attention. The first happened in the Isle of Lions, and gave rise to the second, which took place upon Mount Atlas. The circumstances were as follows:

At two days' journey from that famous mountain, on whose summit, if poets tell the truth, heaven and the zodiac recline, a vast forest extends itself to the very brink of the sea. This forest is filled with animals of every kind, those of prey alone excepted; and we met them in such multitudes, that it was frequently by no means easy to force a passage through them. The inhabitants of a small town, which is situated on its confines, afterwards informed us that all the lions of the surrounding deserts used formerly to quit them for the sake of hunting in this forest, and that having eat up the stags, goats, and hares, they proceeded to eat up the men, women, and children. In this distress the people had recourse to the enchanter Caramoussal, who resides on the mountain's summit, by whose spells the whole lion nation was banished to a small island, which I easily saw from that part of the shore where the sea bathed the foot of Mount Atlas. Unluckily, in consequence of this emigration, the stags and hares had multiplied so prodigiously, that the distress was nearly as great as during the reign of the lions, the enormous herds, which I had observed in my way through the forest, spreading their ravages to all quarters, and devouring the whole produce of the country. To remedy this complaint, a hunting match was made every year into the neighbouring isle, not with the intention of disturbing or hurting the lions, but of taking a dozen, and turning them loose in the forest. I was also informed that this hunting match was to take place in two days, and that, if I chose, I might be present at it.

By any other than a knight-errant a lion hunt might not have been thought a party of pleasure, but I accepted the offer with great joy.

The rendezvous of the hunters was on the shore opposite to the Isle of Lions. The isle seemed to be tolerably extensive, of a wild aspect, and much wooded. The preparations for this chace surprised me not a little. I expected to find plenty of huntsmen, armed with darts, arrows, and clubs, besides dogs of all sorts and sizes. Instead of this, I only saw twenty men, accompanied by the same number of girls, young, and by no means ugly. Each girl held a cock upon her wrist, and the boats in which we embarked were well supplied with strong nets. As we approached the isle we could hear roaring and howls so loud and terrible, that my squire, though naturally brave enough, was evidently by no means at his ease; yet not one of our nymphs was in the least disconcerted.

The shore was soon entirely covered by troops of these polite lions, who waited impatiently to receive us. I did not see the possibility of disembarking, in front of an enemy so tremendous: but three of our vessels touching the shore before the rest, three stags were instantly turned out, whom the lions pursuing, the entrance of the isle was left clear for us. As soon as we landed, we advanced into the depth of the forest; and here, while the men spread their nets, the women covered the cocks with small hoods, similar to those which are put on falcons. Scarcely were the nets spread, when the lions returned to us at full speed: there were about two dozen of them, and all, as far as I could judge, were lions with good stomachs. But as we only wanted three or four at a time, one of the girls unhooded her cock, and pulled him twice or thrice by the tail. The spot, in which we stood, was so dark, that the bird imagined that day was breaking, and began to crow with all his might. The lions at this were so terrified, that they fled from

us with all expedition, one excepted, who fell into our toils. He was immediately embarked with one of the huntsmen, and the girl whose cock had just crowed. Though the lion was sufficiently entangled in the net to prevent his doing any harm, it was thought right to put a kid into the same boat, to prevent his thinking the voyage tedious.

This mode of hunting, which appeared to me not more novel than entertaining, lasted, till every sportsman had embarked with his lion, his lady, and her bird. I insisted upon being the last, the person who brought up the rear running the greatest risk ; and I sent off my squire in the last boat which left the island, the one, which had brought me, remaining for my own use.

Being a stranger, the girl of the best courage, and the cock with the shrillest voice, were assigned to me for fear of accidents. The damsel began to instruct me respecting the best means of retreating ; but enraged to see the cocks carry off all the honour of the expedition, I begged her to keep hers silent, till I had measured my strength against one of the lions, observing, that in case several attacked me at once, she would always have time enough to come to my assistance, and interrupt a combat so unequal. I saw by her looks that she did not above half like the proposal ; but at the moment that she prepared to reply, the lions returned to the attack.

Drawing my sword, I advanced to meet them : at their head was the most formidable monster that I ever beheld ; his mane bristled, and his eyes glared with rage. By accident, too, this lion was deaf as any post ; which I soon discovered, for my companion, (terrified at his enormous size,) made her cock crow without a moment's delay, and its cry was so horribly discordant and so shrill, that it went through and through my head completely. All the lions, except that which I have just mentioned, were immediately seized with a sudden panic, and tumbled over each other in their hurry to escape.

The girl and the cock squalled and crowed till they were hoarse, and the noise which they made was even more disagreeable, than the company of the lion. Without vanity the beginning of our engagement well deserved the observation of more calm and illustrious spectators. I soon drew blood from my antagonist in several places : but in return he gave me a scratch, which beginning at the right ear descended like a scarf, to the extremity of my left heel. I had but little skill, neither indeed had my adversary ; but then he was furnished with a tail, which annoyed me even more than his claws. As it grew late, I took my sword in both hands, meaning to end the contest at once, before the night arrived : the lion, who, according to all appearance, had the very same intention, rose immediately upon his hind legs, at the same time opening for my accommodation a mouth so enormous as to exceed all measure, all rule, all probability ! In her terror at this sight, the girl let the cock slip from her hand ; the lion left me to run after the cock, and I left the girl to run after the lion. I soon overtook him, but not time enough to save the unfortunate cock, whom he had already seized, and whom he swallowed before my eyes, as you would do a sugar-plumb.

This affront added fresh fuel to my wrath. So much was I transported with rage, that without observing the attitude into which the lion had put himself, I struck off his right paw, with which he endeavoured to make me understand that he was willing to capitulate. The ground was deluged by the blood, which gushed from the wound. I still kept upon my guard, not doubting that the violence of his attacks would be redoubled by the thirst of vengeance ; but vengeance was the last thing in his thoughts : on the contrary, supporting himself against a tree, he cast on me a piteous glance, and sighed—“ Ah, Facardin ! ”—

This appeal affected me, and I was on the point of approaching

to assist him, when the cries of my companion summoned me to her succour. She was exerting all her strength to retain the boat, which had broken its cord during the battle ; and as she knew this to be our only resource, she made every possible effort to prevent its escaping. Finding, as soon as I joined her, that instead of embarking I prepared to fasten the boat again to the shore, she was ready to go distracted. I told her, that I would sooner die than abandon in such a forlorn situation the unfortunate lion, who had addressed me in a manner so affecting ; that I was going in search of him, in order that I might transport him with me to the continent ; and that it was my firm resolution to give him all the assistance in my power. She exclaimed vehemently against a proposal, which appeared to her the height of extravagance, and besought me on her knees, not to expose her as well as myself for the sake of an old dead lion to the fury of all the living lions in the islands. She talked in vain : I returned to the place, where I had left him ; but it was without success that I sought him both there and in the adjacent parts of the forest.

In consequence I was obliged to regain the boat, heartily ashamed of not bringing back a lion like the other hunters. But my companion's distress is not to be described. She told me, that the loss of her cock had dishonoured her and her whole family for ever, and that she never could survive so signal a disgrace.

I was still endeavouring to alleviate her despair, which I thought not a little ridiculous, when we reached the foot of Mount Atlas.

It was almost dark. I had lost much blood, and suffered greatly from thirst. Having, in spite of his request to stay, had the attention to send back my squire, I expected that he in return would have the attention to wait for me on the river's bank, or else at the foot of the mountain ; but nobody appeared.

My companion, growing more desperate with every moment, resolved to attempt gaining the summit of Mount Atlas, and implore Caramoussal's assistance ; or in case the magician refused his aid, to precipitate herself from such place as might seem to her most convenient. To prevent the execution of the latter design, I followed her as long as it was possible ; but losing her in the obscurity, which prevented my observing the winding paths through which she passed, after much wandering about the clifts, I was obliged to seat myself in that part which seemed to me most level, and resolved upon passing the night in that situation. Scarcely had I taken my place, when I heard the distant and agreeable noise of a rivulet, which flowed among these solitary rocks. So tormenting was my thirst, that heedless of fatigue, or the dangerous precipices by which I was surrounded, I bent my steps towards the spot whence the sound proceeded. I was certain that I approached it ; still I should have found it difficult to reach, if, by dint of examining, I had not discovered just above me a faint ray of light. I took this for my guide. As I approached, by degrees the light grew stronger, and I fancied that I could distinguish the noise of spinning-wheels. I was not mistaken. By the blaze of two large torches, placed on each side of the door of a wretched hut, I perceived two lean and withered arms, with hands suitable, which, passing through two holes in the door, managed a wheel, and spun with more grace than their appearance promised. Having admired for some moments this discreet and mysterious mode of working, I pushed against the door without knocking. It opened without difficulty, and I beheld the spinner, the rest of whose person was certainly worthy of the specimen, which I had already seen. Her face was like an old parchment pasted upon a death's head ; she was naked to the waist, and never was corpse more dry or wasted than her miserable body. I turned away my eyes, and demanded something to quench my thirst.

" In this abode," she replied, " you shall want nothing, if you will but have patience, and can resist your inclinations, and conquer your dislikes." —

Thus saying, she embraced me, before I was aware of her intention. Then placing me by her, she perceived, that my clothes were bloody. She shuddered, alarmed at my situation, of the danger of which I was myself ignorant.

" Your death would have been inevitable," said she, " had the succour, which I am going to give you, been delayed another hour."

Thus saying, she began to undress me, and examining my wound from top to bottom, she pressed me in her odious arms most affectionately, every now and then kissing the place from whence she wiped the blood. The intolerable disgust, with which her endearments inspired me, did not escape her ; but in spite of these marks of aversion, she continued to anoint my wound with an essence, whose odour perfumed the whole hovel.

" Senseless youth ! " said she ; " knew you the treasure which you reject, and which, I see, you will lose, how fervent would be your gratitude, how different your emotions ! "

I was so much recovered and refreshed by this first dressing, that I needed not a second to be in perfect health. I now only wished to quench my thirst, and free myself from my disagreeable hostess. I therefore requested her to satisfy the first and most urgent of my necessities, since the succour, which she had just given me, would be unavailing, if she suffered me to die of drought.

" I must put you then to that trial," said she, " which I foresee, you will be unable to sustain. Follow me."

So decrepid was she, that she raised herself with the utmost difficulty ; and her person gave me so much disgust, that I could not bring myself to afford her any support. She was quite bent double, and in spite of the crutch on which she

leaned, I thought, she never could drag herself out of the first apartment, the most dirty and miserable one that I ever beheld. The next was rather better, and the third much larger, and tolerably furnished ; but the last was the most magnificent room perhaps in the universe. It appeared to be rather the fabled habitation of some fairy, than the apartment of a mortal. Nothing was to be seen but glasses, admirable pictures, and furniture the most costly. On one side stood an elegant toilette, displaying a variety of jewels ; on the other, a bed, covered with Chinese gold and oriental pearls in embroidery, seemed only to wait the Divinity's arrival, for whose use they were prepared : not far from the toilette I perceived an undress, fit for the wearing of an Empress of eighteen.

It took us a considerable time to reach this chamber ; for besides that the old lady moved very deliberately, she never suffered me to enter any apartment, before she had passed her hands through two holes in the door, and spun for a few moments, as I found her doing on my arrival. My thirst was much irritated by this delay ; still its violence was suspended for some instants, while I gazed on the objects contained in the latter chamber. But my companion soon interrupted this examination.

"Come ! " said she, taking my hand ; "let us to the fountain. What you behold here can only serve to excite flames in your bosom, and what you want is water to cool those which burn there already. Follow me, and you shall be satisfied."

"It was unnecessary for her to say this twice ; I followed her eagerly. The fountain was within a few yards of the magnificent chamber, and from thence had the sound proceeded, which first induced me to search for water. As soon as I beheld it, I rushed open-mouthed towards the largest sheet, which fell from the rock above ; but the provoking old woman detained me by the arm.

"Hear me for the last time!" she cried; "if resisting your inclination to quench your thirst, you can resolve to pass a whole hour in my arms without tasting this water, I will reconduct you to the chamber through which I led you, and you shall be at liberty to pass the remainder of the night with me on that superb couch, which you have just beheld."

Wishing to accompany this proposal with a tender glance, she turned upon me two little pig's eyes, which rather resembled a dog's just dead of the mange, than a human creature's! As for me, in the perfect indifference to beauty which I then felt, and in the violence of thirst so immoderate, I should have preferred three glasses of cold water to the three graces. I therefore shook off her hold rather rudely, ran to the fountain, and began to drink as eagerly as if I feared seeing the stream fail before my thirst was satisfied.

The lady, to whom I had not thought proper to sacrifice this pleasure, retired while I was drinking, and probably not in the best humour. That, however, was to me a matter of absolute indifference. I now found myself perfectly easy and contented; sleep came upon me, and I accepted its advances without hesitation.

It was broad day, when I awoke, and much was I surprised to find myself in a spot, the most horrible that I had ever seen! I gazed around me, striving in vain to comprehend how I had got into such a desert, or how I should get out of it. The stream, of which I had drunk the night before, gushed from the summit of a rock seemingly detached from the rest of the mountain, and I found myself stationed upon this summit. I could perceive the roofs of the hut and of the enchanted palace, which had excited in me such admiration: but I was separated from them, by a precipice so tremendous, that I shuddered, whenever my eye dared to measure its depth; and on every side I was surrounded by beetling rocks, which,

instead of offering me a passage, seemed leaning forward for the express purpose of tumbling themselves upon me. Fully persuaded that I had not been transported to this place through the air, I persisted in my perilous search after some outlet, and at length I succeeded in my inquiry. It was the entrance of a cavern, equally obscure and deep, which seemed rather the retreat of some wild beast, than a passage to scenes less tremendous. However, I resolved to examine it, and drawing my sword, I descended into this gloomy cave ; hopeless of finding any other issue, than that by which I had entered. But after many difficulties, I felt that the ground rose, and perceived a feeble glimmering of light which guided me to the spot, where day penetrated into this subterraneous abyss. This second outlet was totally different from the first : it was a spacious grotto, ornamented with shells and marble statues : a bow of polished steel hung on one side ; on the other was a quiver, ornamented with gold and jewels, and filled with arrows ; and in the middle of the grotto a large cage of jet inlaid with ivory was suspended from the roof. I was so eager to get out of the scrape in which I found myself, that without staying to reflect on what I saw, I hastened out of the cave, and was near treading upon something sparkling which lay a few paces from the door. It was a shoe, whose buckle was formed of four diamonds, the most perfect and brilliant that I ever beheld : but the shoe itself was so small, and so exquisitely shaped, that I bestowed no thought upon the immense worth of the buckle. Having read, that Pallas, when she walks, makes the earth tremble and the forests shake, and that the immortal Juno takes but one stride from Mount Ida to the Isle of Samos, I was tolerably certain, that I had not found the shoe of a goddess ; but I determined to discover the mortal, if it were possible, whose foot could be worthy to wear so delicately formed a slipper.

I brought it away with me, though I did not expect to retain its possession long ; for I guessed it to be the lady's property, whose hunting accoutrements I had seen in the grotto, or else that it belonged to the other invisible nymph, for whom the toilette was prepared in the old woman's hovel. I was still hesitating whether I should return there to seek her, or had better wait in the grotto till some one should come thither to look for the shoe, when I was induced to abandon both designs by hearing cries and lamentations proceed from the rock above. I ascended it in haste ; for the voice seemed to be a female's, and since my finding this slipper, my heart was wonderfully softened in favour of a sex, for which till then I had felt the most perfect indifference. I soon discovered that the mourner was no other than my nymph of the cock ! As soon as she saw me she fell at my feet, entreating me to plunge my sword in her bosom. I was by no means disposed to grant her this favour, for she had already inspired me with a tender inclination. I raised her respectfully, and having assured her that I would hazard my life in the attempt to extricate her from her difficulties, I was on the point of seating myself by her, in order to hear at my ease the cause of her affliction ; when she gave me a look of surprise, eyed me from head to foot, as if she had never seen me before, and removed immediately to some distance.

" Be good enough," said she, " to sit a little farther off, for you seem to me so disagreeable, that I cannot suffer you to come so near me."

I obeyed with all humility, and the impertinent creature, turning away her head, that she might not see me while she spoke, addressed me as follows :—

" Before I disclose the cause of my despair, which perhaps appears to you ridiculous, you must know, that the cocks, which you have seen, are only entrusted to those damsels, who

like myself are distinguished either for rank or merit. Three grand hunting-matches are held every year, similar to that unlucky one at which you were present yesterday, and those young women, who in four years bring home twelve lions, are united to the lovers, who attend on them during those four years. In the meantime they see their admirers at all hours ; but 'tis as much as their lives are worth to grant the least favour, till the twelve lions are taken. Should a cock make his escape, 'tis a sign that there has been some little impropriety in the conduct of his mistress ; however, if the bird is found again, the crime is not capital ; but at the end of three days, if he is still absent, it is a convincing proof of a criminal intercourse, and the seceder from virtue is immediately buried alive. It is this, which causes my despair : my cock never can be found again, since I saw it with my own eyes devoured by that brute of a lion. Wretch that I am ! Why did he not devour me at the same time ! Why did I not perish without knowing the most amiable of mankind ; or why did not all the men whom I have ever known appear to me as ugly and disagreeable as you do ? "

Insults so broad would have offended most people ; but the worse that she treated me, the more did I admire her, and I was still endeavouring to express my growing passion, when her lover made his appearance. I immediately recognised him for one of our hunters, nor was my companion slow in showing her recollection of him. She instantly flew towards him with open arms, and professed herself happy, before she was deprived for ever of the light of day, once more to behold the beams of his bright eyes. Now this lover of hers was bandy-legged, pug-nosed, and copper-coloured ; and the bright eyes, which she raved about (like a Chinese pig's), never had known what it was to be quite open. Having embraced her tenderly, he told her, that guessing her distress, he had provided a boat,

which then waited at the foot of the mountain, and that he could easily carry her off, if I, who had reduced her to this extremity, would for one hour protect them from the matron's monster.

"And who is the matron's monster?" said I.

"You will know but too soon," he answered, "for he is looking for his lady's slipper, which I see in your hand."

This said, he clasped his mistress in his arms, and hastened with her towards the sea with all expedition. At first I felt a little jealous, but no sooner were they out of sight, than I thought no more of them. Adventures had succeeded each other so rapidly on this mountain, that scarcely could I persuade myself that I was not in a dream; but more were yet behind, for it now happened—

"'Tis you, who dream," interrupted Dinarzade impatiently: "you are desired to relate your own adventures, which in the present posture of affairs you should have told as concisely as possible; and instead of this you weary us with another person's, accompanied with details so uninteresting, that it is a doubt whether they are more tedious or trifling."

"And what does it signify," cried the Sultan, "whose adventures he relates, so that they amuse me, and last out the night? What have I better to do, than to hear them? Go on, Facardin," he added, "and heed not the remarks of these chatterboxes, who never are satisfied, but when they are talking themselves."

Dinarzad bit her lips with impatience. The fair Sultana, who had now passed a thousand nights in bed, with nothing better to amuse her than tales only fit to set one asleep, raised her eyes devoutly to heaven, and Facardin of Trebizonde proceeded thus:—

If I remember right, I was interrupted in that part of the stranger's history, where he informed me that he fancied himself

to have been dreaming, while revolving the variety of events to which so short a space of time had given rise. I now endeavoured, he continued, to regain the grotto ; but instead of taking the path by which I had ascended the rock, I followed one, which, after a tedious journey, conducted me to the matron's abode. The door was open ; the spinning-wheel was still there, but no hands were employed in turning it. Finding no longer so insuperable an aversion for a female whose first appearance had so much disgusted me, I resolved to enter, and review the wonders of the beautiful apartment. I held the slipper in my hand ; I ceased not for a moment to admire it, and I frequently pressed it to my lips as fondly as if it had been the portrait of a mistress most passionately beloved.

Just as I prepared to enter the hut, I was stopped by an enormous giant, armed with a huge club, and covered with rough hair from head to foot. His manner of accosting me surprised me considerably, for his gestures were much less gentle, and his looks much more savage than the lion's, whom I had the honour of killing the day before. The first thing which he did on seeing me, was to take his club in both hands, and gnash his teeth like a wild boar : the second was to thank Heaven for throwing the thief in his way, who had stolen his lady's slipper ; and he then proceeded to assure me, that he should already have dashed out the few brains which the gods had given me, if the matron his mistress had not commanded him to reserve me for torments the most excruciating. From the sound of the voice which uttered it, I fancied that some bull was pleased to make me this civil speech ; after which the giant continuing his discourse, ordered me to surrender the slipper, and follow him without delay.

"I should find it less trouble," said he, "to take it from you by force, than to ask you for it ; but my mistress has com-

manded me to make you restore it through fear of my prowess, and therefore down upon your knees this moment."

"Are those your mistress's commands?" said I; "then pray, present my best respects to her, and tell her from me, that neither you nor all your fellow-monsters put together shall make me surrender a shoe, whose beauty has charmed me, and which I did not obtain by dishonourable means."

As I said this, I saw that the wild dromedary had already raised his club to crush me, and I instantly drew my sword. His strength was prodigious; but as he was not very expert, I easily avoided his blows, the gentlest of which was sufficient to shiver the rocks in pieces, and overturn the surrounding trees. However, as I contrived to draw blood from him every time that he missed me, I should probably have finished the combat unhurt, had it not been my fate to get scratched in this land of wonders. It seems that the giant had a nail on the great toe of his right foot, which the Erymanthian boar might have been proud of. This I did not discover for some time, but at length I had good reason to perceive it; for as I stooped to escape a blow from his club, which he pretended to aim at me, he found an opportunity of giving me a slash by no means inferior to that, which I had received from the lion the day before. This incensed me so highly, that with a furious blow I lopped off the leg, to whose foot was attached the weapon which had favoured me with so respectable a wound. His fall was like that of a tower's, and the earth trembled as he touched it. I threw myself upon him intending to strike his ugly head from his shoulders; but a voice, which proceeded from the hut, made me hold my hand.

"Valiant knight," cried the voice, "kill not my monster."

I obeyed, and quitting him entered the hovel, intending to present the matron with the slipper which force could not oblige me to surrender, and to explain that I had not obtained it by

discreditable means. I now supposed that it must belong to some daughter or niece of hers, for whom in all probability the chamber and clothes were prepared, which I had seen the night before.

But in vain did I traverse the various apartments; no one appeared; and part of the garments, which I had seen near the toilette, had been taken away. Hoping to obtain from him some intelligence of his mistress, I returned to the place where I had left the giant; but he also was gone, and had carried away his leg with him. Though I had lost a considerable quantity of blood, I did not find myself much weakened, and was only sensible of hunger to a degree not less violent than had been the thirst, which tormented me the night before. I resolved to look for something to appease the first, where I had so lately succeeded in appeasing the second; but the hovel door closed at my approach, nor could all my efforts suffice to open it. The grotto was now my only resource—I sought it for some time without success, nor perhaps should I ever have found it, had I not been conducted thither by the agreeable smell of roast meat. With an appetite like mine I could not have met with a guide more acceptable: I followed it with joy; and no sooner did I reach the grotto, than I was more than ever convinced that I must certainly be dreaming.

How beautiful was the form which on my entrance presented itself to my admiration! A nymph in a hunting-dress was reclining on a magnificent sofa, and looked in that attitude, as if the queen of love had borrowed Diana's garments to follow to the chace some new Adonis. Part of her bosom was uncovered; and that part was, in my opinion, worth all the treasures which the caverns of the earth, the billows of the sea, or the women in the universe, can possibly manage to conceal. Her petticoat was tucked up on one side, and fastened above her knee by a diamond buckle, similar to that which

ornamented the beautiful slipper ; and the leg, which by this means was displayed, was so exquisitely turned, as to make me certain that it could not possibly be the property of a mortal. As soon as she saw me, she gazed on me for a few moments with attention.

" Though the aversion with which your ridiculous deformity inspires me," said she, " and the esteem which I cannot deny to your valour, are now combating within my bosom, I am still willing to offer you the means of securing your own happiness, and at the same time of contributing to mine. You have found my slipper," she continued, " and your presumption in touching it is expiated in some degree by the intrepidity with which you asserted your claim to it. Had you surrendered it to the giant, there would have been an end for ever of your hopes and mine, for in the man who would possess me, courage is an indispensable qualification. But before I proceed, let me prove to you that this shoe is really mine ; here is my foot ; approach, and put it on."

I obeyed with mingled tenderness and respect, and while kneeling before her, my transports were so violent that I scarcely knew what I was about. The shoe was put on with all imaginable ease ; after which she bade me take it off again, and then inquired what had conducted me to the grotto. I now for the first time recollect my necessities, and I told her that I was dying of hunger, with a look as fond and languishing as if I had told her that I was dying of love.

" What !" she exclaimed ; " ever these gross and sensual desires ? Last night you visited the matron because you were thirsty, and this morning your only reason for visiting me is because you are hungry ! But no matter ; I shall soon discover whether you deserve the misfortune which you have drawn upon yourself by drinking, and whether you will make yourself worthy of that glorious fate which will be yours as

soon as you shall have eaten sufficiently. As I am impatient to know whether you really merit the advantages which the stars appear to promise you, take this bow without delay, and let me see whether you can bend it."

I obeyed, persuaded that I should find this task as ~~easy~~ as the putting on her slipper ; but it was not without considerable efforts that I at length succeeded. No sooner was the deed performed, than the string of the bow produced a sound so melodious, that it could only be equalled by that which proceeded from the cage of Jet ; whose door opening at that moment, a large bird flew out with such swiftness, as to prevent my distinguishing its species. Surprised at the adventure which I had just accomplished, the nymph surveyed me with attention, but almost instantaneously turned away her head again, as if her eyes had been shocked by some disgusting object.

"Take an arrow from yonder quiver," said she ; "look upwards, and aim at whatever you see in the air."

I left the grotto, and thought I could distinguish a fly far above me. As nothing else was to be seen, I discharged my arrow at it, which was soon out of sight ; but just when I supposed it to be in the middle region of the air (so long was it ere it descended), I saw it fall at my feet, loaded with the largest cock that I ever beheld.

The nymph ran towards the bird, kissed it thrice affectionately, and drew out the arrow ; on which the cock sprang into the air as if nothing had happened, and disappeared in a few moments. This exploit seemed to inspire the fair huntress with more respect for me, though not enough to abate her aversion.

"Yes," said she ; "you must certainly be the person destined to release me ; yet if I owe my deliverance to you, how can I endure to pass my life with a man whose appearance

is no less disgusting and ridiculous than his actions are glorious and sublime? Prince, be careful of my slipper; seek through every region of the earth, nor present yourself again before me, till you have found a foot that can fit my shoe, a woman that can love you, or a cock that can fly as high as that which you have just seen. Having presented me with one of these three wonders, you will only need to obtain the matron's favours to entitle you to mine; but without this last condition, and one or other of the first three, I shall always be unfortunate, and you never will be happy. However, before you set out in search of these adventures, I must put you to a preliminary trial. You remember, I suppose, that in spite of all entreaties to the contrary, you insisted last night upon drinking: to punish you for this obstinacy, I now inform you that however great may be your disgust, you are expected to eat whatever may be set before you, without being desired at all."

I asked no better: I thought that nothing could be served up at the table of a person so elegant, that could possibly baulk an appetite so voracious as mine; but when I examined what was placed before me, it was a wonder that I kept from fainting. You never could guess, valiant knight, what composed this diabolical ragout; I am therefore obliged to explain, that the dish contained the giant's leg, not forgetting the foot, and the large nail that adorned it!

The sight made my hair bristle with horror; I turned sick, and was leaving the grotto, anxious to escape from so disgusting an object, when, without speaking, the nymph heaved a deep sigh, and gave me a look no less expressing pity than resentment. That look was sufficient to determine my conduct: I closed my eyes, tore off a morsel from the leg, and swallowed it. Having obeyed thus far, I again prepared to retire, assuring my hostess that I should feel no desire to eat for at least the next four days. She seemed much softened by my com-

pliance, fixed her eyes upon me more steadily than before, and so much delighted me by the change which I perceived in their expression, that I got down a little bit more. On this she drew nearer, placed her hand familiarly upon my shoulder, and told me that although she would not ask it of me, it was necessary for me to pick the whole leg to the bones.

"I feel the charm's effect," said she ; "my heart tells me that the first spell is on the point of being dissolved. Persevere, and you need not go far to find a woman who loves you ; but if you leave this place, or if your meal is interrupted, before you can empty the dish, you will become, if possible, more disagreeable to me than you are at present."

These words touched my heart, and produced no slight effect upon my head ; they animated my courage, but alas ! they did not augment my appetite. However, though the leg was sufficient to feed ten famished persons, since such was the condition of my trial, I resolved to use every effort to fulfil it ; and I determined either to swallow the whole, or to burst bravely before the eyes of my Divinity ! It was in the very midst of this magnanimous attempt that my confounded squire, who probably had been seeking me for some time, made the rocks re-echo with the name of Facardin. Suddenly the nymph changed colour ; she seemed irresolute for a few moments, and then finding that I was the object of pursuit, she hastened into the subterraneous passage, leaving me more confounded, more surprised and more afflicted, than I have power to express. I had perceived that her glances grew milder ; the wound given me by the giant closed while I was employed in eating his leg ; and the presence of the most lovely creature in the universe, who reclined affectionately upon my shoulder, had enabled me to support the horror of my trial. But no sooner did she leave me, than forgetting her injunctions I forsook my horrible repast, and flew towards the passage by which she had

departed : the moment that I approached it, a strong and rushing wind not only opposed my entrance, but raised me with violence from the ground, and blew me out of the grotto. As soon as I was on the outside, the door (which had two holes in it similar to those in the door which protected the matron's cottage) closed of its own accord ; through these holes two arms, whiter than snow, and more beautiful than Cytherea's, immediately passed themselves ; an ebony spinning-wheel inlaid with gold placed itself spontaneously before them, and the spinning recommenced with more diligence than ever. I was now convinced that the Divinity whom I had just seen was the matron's daughter, and that spinning was a favourite occupation in this enchanted family. I drew nearer, with the intention of throwing myself on my knees before the nymph, of whom I saw nothing but the arms, and of conjuring her in pity to open the door ; when my squire, having at length discovered me, began to bawl out my name louder than ever. Immediately the beautiful hands disappeared ; the grotto door opened with violence ; and the giant, putting out his head, blew in my face with such force, that he rolled both my squire and myself down to the place where I had first distinguished the ray of light which had guided me to the matron's cottage. When I recovered from my fall, my squire informed me that it was high time to be gone, and he conjured me to descend with all expedition, while it was still in my power to escape.

" What could put it in your head," said he, " to climb this confounded mountain, which is crammed full of sorcerers and enchantments, while all the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were in search of you ? I waited till midnight by the river side ; and then, supposing that while I was looking for you there, you must have landed somewhere else, in hopes of finding you I hastened to the next village ; but here I was

told rare news of you : it was reported that you had either seduced or ravished the girl who was left with you on the island ; that her cock was lost ; that you had disembarked with her, and that both had concealed yourselves in the cavities of the mountain, to avoid the punishment of your offence. In consequence all the inhabitants assembled this morning at day-break ; a council was held ; the troops were ordered to march ; and one part of them, undertaking to surround the mountain, and bar every avenue, the other ascended it, and dispersed themselves through all the various paths by which it was possible for you to have passed. Now then, my dear master, I gave you up for lost. They had secured me, fearful lest I should apprise you of their designs ; and they assured me very seriously, that I should have the honour to share your punishment. I was almost distracted to think that a man who had always been so prudent and so indifferent respecting this sort of frailty, as you have been, should at length throw away his life thus foolishly for the sake of a vulgar hussy and her dung-hill cock. In the midst of these melancholy reflections, a loud shout, proceeding from that side of the mountain which was nearest the sea, augmented my distress ; for it was immediately reported that you had been seized in the very act of eloping with your new mistress. How great was my joy when I beheld the captives. The companion of this unlucky girl was one of the hunters, who it seems had been long attached to her. Their doom was pronounced without delay ; and though they continued to assert their innocence, the lover was compelled to dig a pit, into which he put his mistress up to the neck, after tenderly embracing her, and taking a most affectionate farewell. The pit was then filled up again ; but at the very moment that nothing of the damsel was visible except her head, and which was also on the point of disappearing, a cock was heard to crow in the air above her.

All raised their eyes ; the noise was heard again, but still nothing could be distinguished. At length one of the principal persons drew a telescope from his pocket, and declared that it was a gnat mimicking the crowing of a cock : on the other hand, the lover asserted that it was the identical cock which his mistress had lost, and swore by the great Caramoussal that he recognised him by his manner of crowing. While they were still debating this question, a real live cock, which had raised itself higher than ever cock had done before, descended and perched upon the damsels head. The universal acclamations gave him not the least alarm ; he kept his place with great intrepidity, while the whole company agreed in thinking that this prodigy was effected by the great Caramoussal, and was a convincing proof of the girl's innocence ; but no sooner did they approach in order to restore her to liberty, than the cock stretched out his neck, clapped his wings, crowed thrice, and then darting into the air with the swiftness of a falcon, in a moment was out of sight. This persuaded the spectators that her conduct with her lover had not been perfectly correct ; but as the cock in clapping his wings, had put out her left eye, he was supposed to have meant this as a punishment for granting trifling favours, and she was declared fully justified of any capital offence. In consequence, she was immediately released both from the pit and her apprehensions ; she was conducted home to her parents in triumph ; and while they were busied in dressing her eye, I hastened hither to conjure you to leave a country where the mountains are full of sorcerers, the islands of lions, and the villages of men, women, and cocks, who, for anything that I can see, are not a jot better than the sorcerers or the lions."

The truth of this account was confirmed by my adventures on the mountain. I resolved therefore to follow my squire's advice, and we left this repository of prodigies and incompre-

hensible events without meeting any further impediment. The more that I revolved upon what had passed, the less was I persuaded that it had really happened. The lion, who had called me by my name ; the old woman, who loved me so tenderly ; the young one, who hated me so inveterately ; the nymph of the grotto, who enjoined me to do what could not be done ; the water, which I drank with such eagerness, and the meat, which I eat with such disgust ; all appeared to have been equally delusions : but the precious slipper was still in my possession, and that was sufficient to establish the reality of all the rest. I caused this helmet to be made at the nearest city ; and this cock enriched with diamonds, clapping his wings, and in the act of crowing, conceals the wonderful shoe, which I shall now offer to your admiration."

Here, opening the crest of his helmet, the courteous stranger drew forth the shoe, which he had praised so highly ; it was concealed within the golden cock, which I had at first mistaken for an eagle. I confess, most illustrious Sultan, the sight of it filled me with surprise. This slipper was in truth a masterpiece, no less in respect to shape than size and elegance. I could not look at it without emotion, though I was convinced that it was made solely to display the artist's workmanship, and could not have been designed for the use of any human being. In vain did the stranger protest that his own hands had placed it on the foot of the fair huntress : I persisted in my incredulity. Having examined it for some time, and with the owner's permission pressed it respectfully to my lips, I at length restored it to its former concealment : after which Facardin of Mount Atlas resumed his narration.

The insignificant adventures, said he, which I met with after this, are unworthy your attention ; nor will I trouble you with the tedious list of refusals, insults, and disdain which fell to my lot, wherever my vows were offered. I thought every

woman deserving my affection, and every woman thought my affection undeserving her acceptance. They who were no longer in the bloom of life, preferred their servants, and they who were, preferred mine. However, if all refused me their favours, none refused to try on the shoe ; but here, alas ! I was no less unsuccessful : not one could get in a single toe. No hope now remained for me but to find a cock which could raise itself as high as that of the fair huntress ; that is to say, a cock that could fly like an eagle. To my sorrow, I find, that this is no less a rarity than a woman who can love me, or a foot that can fit the beautiful slipper.

I had already traversed Asia and Africa, and was on the point of embarking for Europe, when the ambassadors of Fortimbrass with the great mouth, king of Denmark, arrived at the port of Sidon. They told us that they were in pursuit of a mouth proportioned like their master's, and expressed their fears that their search would be unsuccessful. To justify these apprehensions, they drew from a golden casket the exact measure of the royal mouth, and a most enormous one it was in truth ! I owned that though I had travelled far and wide, I never had met with a mouth at all to be compared to it ; and I begged to be informed, when he had found it, what in the world their master meant to do with a mouth so monstrous. I was answered, that this desire was excited by a most strange and unfortunate adventure, which they had not then time to explain ; on this the chief ambassador, who seemed a person of no small consequence, sighed several times, and at length burst into tears. The eyes of his companions immediately overflowed ; and both my squire and myself were too well bred not to follow their example, though what these venerable persons were crying about, we could not conceive.

"Adieu, my beloved country !" exclaimed at length the chief ambassador ; "we bid you an eternal adieu, forbidden to

revisit your happy climates till two things are found, neither of which the earth can furnish."

Guessing that the large mouth must be one of those things, I begged him to inform me what was the other. He replied that his master had a daughter, on whom he doated. She was extremely beautiful, and called Sapinella of Jutland. This damsel not being able to get slippers to fit her, had gone mad in consequence, and persuaded her father to hang up all the cobblers in the kingdom. Informed of the difficulty to please her, and dreading the fate of their comrades, the foreign shoemakers had refused to work for her ; and at length things were brought to such a pass, that, yielding to his affection for her, the king had published throughout his dominions, that whoever could shoe the beautiful Sapinella should marry her for his trouble. It was, however, specified in the bargain, that such as failed in the attempt should be hung with as little ceremony as had been shown to their predecessors.

" And thus," continued the ambassador—" thus are we, wretched slaves of a despotic master and a capricious mistress, condemned either to find the little slipper and the large mouth, or never to revisit the fertile plains of Denmark—Denmark, that beloved country which gave us birth. Such are the curious commissions which we are enjoined to execute ; and you can easily conceive that we have but too much reason in thinking that we have bidden adieu for ever to our native land ! "

While making these reflections the tender-hearted ambassador cried like an infant. Those which his narrative had suggested to me were of a very different nature ; and after meditating for some time upon the conditions stipulated in the King of Denmark's edict, I asked what would be the consequence of presenting Sapinella with a shoe too small.

" For " said I, " though I suppose her in size to be no

bigger than a doll, yet a slipper may be made so small that even a doll cannot get her foot into it."

Highly offended by this observation, the chief ambassador bestowed on me a look of most profound contempt.

"Young man," said he, "when you have seen a little more of the world, you will learn to treat a fair one with greater respect, whose fame can only be unknown to yourself, and such as resemble you. Should chance ever lead you to the feet of our princess, you will see what sort of feet they are, and be obliged to confess that, Moussellina the Serious excepted, she need yield to no one in point of figure. 'Tis not, therefore, so much the smallness of her foot—that being perfectly proportioned to her commanding height, which makes the fitting her with shoes a matter of difficulty—as its shape, elegance, and form, no less singular than beautiful."

"But, my good lord ambassador," said I, "suppose the person who produces a slipper perfectly adapted to the shape, elegance, and singular form of this beautiful foot should by no means be inclined to marry your infanta, what would be the consequence of his refusal ?

"Should any one be found," answered the Dane—"but it appears to me impossible that there should—so cold, so stupid, so weak in judgment, and so deficient in taste as to renounce Sapinella of Jutland's lawful possession, she is then obliged by oath (her honour and all belonging to it being out of the question) to grant him whatever favour he may think proper to demand."

My reasons for asking this question, I doubt not, valiant stranger, are already known to you. This answer determined my conduct, for till then my scruples had kept me in suspense. Though the charming huntress still reigned in my bosom, not to fall in love with every woman who came in my way was to me utterly impossible. However, the moment they were out of

sight I forgot all others, and only remembered the beautiful unknown. The princess offered her hand to him who could accomplish a task which she despaired of ever seeing performed ; on the other hand, certain death was his punishment who failed in the attempt. I had long sought a foot worthy the most beautiful shoe in the world ; Sapinella had long sought a shoe worthy the most beautiful foot in the universe, which, as she thought, belonged to her own person. If, on the one hand, I feared, lest the sensibility of my heart should make me forget everything but her beauty, while I gazed on a princess, who had been painted to me in colours so fascinating ; on the other, the aversion with which I had always inspired the whole sex, seemed to promise me a safe-guard against my own weakness. I had traversed two quarters of the world without finding a female who would accept my heart ; nor had I found any cocks except dunghill ones, who knew no more how to fly than I did myself. I determined therefore to embark on board one of the ambassador's vessels to try my slipper on the foot of the Danish princess ; and should I succeed in my attempt, then to lead her to the grotto in triumph, where dwelt the nymph with the steel-bow. The ambassadors, who really were mighty good sort of people, opposed this design with much earnestness. They represented to me all the difficulties of such an enterprise ; and they assured me, that I should find it very inconvenient to be hung in the flower of my age, a fate which I could not escape should I handle Sapinella's foot without success. I was obstinate ; and as I had not divulged to him the mystery of the beautiful slipper, the chief ambassador, who was much addicted to blubbering, actually burst into tears on seeing me ascend the vessel.

The wind was so favourable, that seven months after my embarkation I reached the Scandinavian coast so favoured by nature. Having traversed those immense provinces, I at length

arrived at the court of Fortimbrass with the wide mouth. Here it was that I expected to meet with adventures much more worthy your attention than those which you have just heard. Judge, then, how great was my disappointment when, upon inquiring for the princess, I was informed——

In this part of his history the handsome stranger was interrupted by an unexpected flourish of cymbals, tymbals, fifes, trumpets, flageolets, bagpipes, cowhorns, and drums, which suddenly resounded through the forest. We looked eagerly round us, and our eyes for some time rested in vain on the spot whence the noise proceeded. The nearer that this singular concert approached, the more was our surprise augmented, as we still were unable to discover the cause. Suddenly my secretary and the stranger's squire, who had climbed two lofty trees, and who by this means enjoyed a more extensive look out, rejoined us in terror, and announced that a troop of Arabs, whom the hills had till then prevented us from descrying, was seen hastening towards us, no doubt intending to surround our little party. On receiving this intelligence we took our camels from our attendants, and having mounted them, advanced boldly towards the robbers, whom we could now perceive; but we soon discovered that the new-comers were neither robbers nor Arabs; and that, as to surrounding us, nothing could be farther from their inclination. Still their appearance surprised us not a little. As far as our eyes could reach we discovered an ever-lengthening chain of camels, horses, mules, and elephants, heavily laden with litters, palanquins, and baggage of every description. They were escorted by a numerous body of soldiers and slaves, all habited in chintz, the colours of which were so lively and brilliant, that the whole appeared to us a moving parterre, enamelled with the choicest flowers of spring and summer. We stopped to observe the progress of this singular convoy, in whose middle a palanquin, sparkling with gold,

and adorned with designs of the most exquisite finish, failed not to attract the chief part of our observation.

This palanquin was shut up on all sides. Four slaves of gigantic stature bore it on their shoulders, while of four satraps on horse-back each supported an umbrella over it, to protect it from the heat of the sun. The satraps, the slaves, and the palanquin, were all covered with chintz ; but that chintz was of so fine a texture, so admirably painted, and magnificently embroidered, that my secretary (than whom nobody understands these matters better) has frequently assured me since, that it could not be worth less than two talents an ell. Round the palanquin the musicians were stationed, whose concert had been the original means of engaging our attention. Unluckily as soon as they approached us the concert began again, and we soon discovered, that in order to remain in its neighbourhood, it was absolutely necessary to be well used to it. This unexpected music made us start one and all ; but it appeared so terrible to our camels, that after all the extravagant actions which sudden terror makes those animals perform, they fairly ran away with us. Every effort to hold them back only redoubled their impatience to be gone, and the impetuosity with which they hurried us away. My secretary's beast and my own, who stuck close together, turning short round as if by agreement, dashed like mad things through the rear, which came loitering after the rest, and trampled upon all, who happened to be in their way. The general confusion which this occasioned, and the cries of such as found themselves attacked in this *impromptu* manner, increased still more the fury of these infernal animals, who slackened not their speed, till they reached the banks of a large river. Here for a moment they stopped to take breath ; but the recollection of their fright soon returning, they plunged into the water, without giving us the least hint of their design. All that we could do in this moment of surprise, was to hold fast,

by the ears, and endeavour to reach the opposite bank of the river, which was both deep and rapid. We were now above fifteen stadii distant from the forest, where we had caused so much confusion. Gladly would I have returned thither, being equally anxious to know what was become of the handsome Facardin, and to hear the conclusion of his adventures. But my secretary representing to me the danger and difficulty of repassing the river, the near approach of night, and the fresh disturbance which our camels would occasion, should the same infernal clatter recommence on our arrival, I gave up the point, and suffered him to conduct me to a cottage, which we descried at some distance. I passed the night in all the agonies of impatience: no sooner did the morning dawn, than I again set forward, anxious to learn what could be meant by this triumphal procession, in which chintz furniture made so conspicuous a figure, and still more desirous of rejoining Facardin and his shoe, from whom I hoped to hear the catastrophe of his adventures. Unluckily a dreadful tempest which had not ceased during the night, swelling the mountain-torrents, had caused such an overflow of the river, that it would have been useless to attempt to pass it or to wait till the waters should abate. The people with whom I lodged, assured me, that all the plains on that side would be inundated for at least a month: thus then was I separated from this amiable stranger, of whom I have never since been able to obtain a sight, in spite of my anxiety and efforts to rejoin him.

Here Dinarzade heaved a deep sigh, as if just relieved from some great oppression.

"A thousand thanks," she cried, raising her hands to heaven, "a thousand thanks to the satraps in chintz, the gilded palanquin, the slaves who bore it, the umbrellas which shaded it, and above all to the flageolets, fifes, cymbals, and bagpipes, which by frightening your camel, separated you from

Facardin the Second ! and oh ! for ever blessed be the river, whose well-timed overflowing prevented you from falling in with him again ! Had it not been for that fortunate accident, I doubt not you would have weariest us as intolerably with the end of his adventures, as you have already done with the beginning. For Heaven's sake, my dear prince, tell me at once, how many years it will take you to relate your history, and how many volumes may be made out of your secretary's journal ; since though you have now trespassed upon our good Sultan's patience for a very considerable time, as you have employed it entirely in recounting the misfortunes of another person, while of your own I have not heard one syllable, I confess to you, that I begin to despair of ever hearing your history conclude." —

Luckily Schahriar—whose custom it was to have the soles of his feet tickled by his great chamberlain—had just then fallen into a gentle slumber, and therefore, his sister-in-law's remarks for this time escaped him. Had it not been for this accident, there is reason to believe, that she would not have got off with a simple reprimand. Facardin, indeed, who, to give him his due, was extremely good-humoured, hastened to prevent the Sultan's being aware of the interruption, and rescued Dinarzade from his displeasure by resuming his discourse.

" As during the latter part of my narration," said he, " the attention of your most august and victorious Majesty seemed to be drawn off, by some meditations no doubt of very serious public and political importance ; in order to connect the broken threads of my story, I will just repeat the heads of what escaped you, while buried in your own profound reflections."

" Don't give yourself the trouble," answered the Sultan, " I have not lost a syllable ; and to convince you of it, I remember, that while I meditated on the means of preserving the tranquillity of my subjects, and the prosperity of my dominions, you

recited, how the palanquins, elephants, chintz curtains, and umbrellas, took to their heels, and dashed into the sea, as soon as your squires and their camels began to play upon their fifes and bag-pipes."

"Exactly so!" exclaimed Dinarzade; "the Prince of Trebizonde need only continue his history; and if ever your Majesty should take it into your head to repeat the whole in the style of the specimen, which we have just heard, I'll engage for its being the most curious narrative, that ever was related in mortal hearing!"

"Silence!" said the Sultan; "I wish to give all my attention to the prince. Trebizonde, proceed."

I was considerably vexed, continued Facardin, at my abrupt separation from the handsome stranger, not only because I had already imbibed a sincere attachment to him, but because I meant to have requested him to change his name; lest the exploits by which I intended to make mine illustrious, should be ascribed indiscriminately to one or other of the only two Facardins existing. However, but a short time elapsed, ere I discovered that this precaution would have been of no avail.

Some persons have minds so inactive as to pass whole hours without opening their lips, and this more particularly happens when they are alone. For my part, never having been afflicted with that supineness of imagination, which leads people to meditate on the various objects which present themselves to travellers without discussing them by word of mouth, whenever I had nobody else to converse with, I held a conversation with myself. Sometimes I repeated a scene or two from some new play; sometimes I hummed a favourite air, and at other times I whistled it. In short, I made use of every source of amusement, which talents and an excellent education could supply, instead of wasting my time in building castles in the air, like the stupid dreamers to whom I just now alluded. It is true

my secretary did not come under this description ; but then he had another whim, which was not a jot more sensible or entertaining. Every twelve yards he halted, and drawing out a portfolio crammed full of his remarks, he busied himself with the utmost gravity in chalking down all the rivers, castles, wind-mills, mountains, and pigeon-houses, which he saw from the road. One day in particular he put me out of all patience.

"I wonder, Jessamin," said I ; "I wonder, that with such a long beard hanging down to your girdle, you are not ashamed of being so childish as to keep eternally scratching and scrawling, when you might employ yourself so much better in remaining near me, listening to my discourse, and replying to my questions. Pry'thee, put up that bundle of trash, and look in your list of perilous adventures, for that which happens to be nearest at hand ; for in fact I am heartily weary of wandering about, as I have done, for these last three weeks, without knowing where I am, or whither going."

As I said this, we approached a bridge, which he was just then in the very act of drawing ; nor was it without infinite reluctance, that he had consented to lay aside his employment. However, my orders being repeated, he prepared to obey me ; when suddenly our camels began to whine, and snuff, and seemed to be seized with some violent panic. A moment after we heard the tuning of instruments, and immediately about half-a-dozen persons appeared at the other end of the bridge. They were all dressed in a sort of chintz uniform, and no sooner did they descry us, than they began to get their instruments in order and tune, by way of doing honour to our approach. Perceiving these musicians to be of the same kind with those whom we had left in the forest, we begged leave by signs to decline the serenade, with which they were preparing to compliment us. They easily discovered by the violent agitation of

our camels, that we made this request on their account. Unluckily the distress of these beasts appeared to the musicians so entertaining, that as they staggered across the bridge (for they were completely drunk) they thought proper to heighten it by an additional symphony. No sooner were the first notes audible, than my secretary's camel, recollecting the means by which he had just escaped, dashed into the river without hesitation ; and while in hopes of gaining the opposite bank his master held fast by the neck, the curious memoirs of our travels, which he had not had time to put up, floated down the stream to our great discomfiture. With respect to *my* camel, the principal musician had seized him by the bridle, and the others prevented him from rejoining his companion. When the poor beast found that all avenues to escape were barred, he dropped on his knees, trembling like an aspen ; he shut his eyes, not being able to shut his ears, and sent forth such melancholy cries and groans, that I found it impossible to refrain from laughter ; especially when I heard the other camel, affected by his friend's situation, answer her in the same pathetic strain from the opposite side of the river.

I sprang upon my feet ; and the principal musician, who still held my camel's bridle, having persuaded his companions to withdraw (for he dreaded lest they should occasion some new alarm), conducted me across the bridge, frequently apologising for the insolence of these drunkards. He informed me that they belonged to a band, with the other members of which, he supposed, I had not come in contact ; since, to judge from my camel's turn of mind, he thought, that had he heard them, the animal must have died of the fright, they being very numerous, and being positively ordered to play on all their instruments, as soon as a stranger appeared in sight. He added, that he had staid behind in order to collect these rascals

together, who had separated themselves from the convoy, in order to drink at the different ale-houses on the road, and that he must hasten to rejoin the train of the princess.

"What princess?" said I.

"Moussellina the Serious," answered my new acquaintance; "who is returning to her father's dominions in hopes of laughing."

"Of laughing!" I exclaimed; "what can you mean?"

"I mean," replied he, "that she has been travelling about for these three months for the sole purpose of laughing, and it is for the sole purpose of laughing, that she now returns to her native land. But what a simpleton am I," he continued, "to think it necessary to explain to you what you must know so much better than myself."

Thus saying, he hastened to rejoin his companions, as fast as he could lay legs to the ground. It was in vain that I called after him, begging him to come back, and satisfy my curiosity: he turned not his head towards me, and nothing could persuade my secretary to let me mount my camel and follow him; for Jessamin protested that he had rather die than be again in the power of that unmerciful music. We hastened, therefore, to escape from it; he lamenting the loss of his journal, and I, that of an explanation respecting the princess of Astracan. I might have passed the time till midnight in these reflections, had I chosen it, for my secretary kept at a considerable distance behind, probably endeavouring to set down the heads of the adventures which had been contained in his journal; but the silence which his reverie compelled me to observe becoming intolerable, I stopped, and waited till he came up with me.

"Jessamin," said I, as soon as he joined me, "look among your papers for the list of places, of which the enchantments and perils are likely to furnish me with some employment; I

wish, as I told you before, to go immediately to those, which are nearest at hand."

"Look for it yourself," answered he, peevishly ; "all my lists, journals, and papers of every description are following the course of the river, while I am following your Highness on this devil of a camel, who makes me every moment give myself up for lost ; nay, he is even a great obstacle to my salvation, so often does he put me under the necessity of cursing both himself and our great prophet for introducing him into the world. If you like it, my lord, you are perfectly at liberty to follow these papers, which in fact are commentaries of our illustrious actions : for my own part, I am not quite so great a fool as to run the risk of drowning in the attempt to fish them up. But for Heaven's sake, where is the use of scampering after adventures in your present equipage ! Is it not clear that, however great may be your courage, there needs but a fiddle to make you run from one end of the world to the other ? I would really advise you to restrain this violent thirst for glory which torments you, till you have a better chance of satisfying it. We are now within three days' journey of the Persian Gulf. In the city, which is enriched by the commerce of that sea, you may find the most beautiful horses in the universe : there, if your Highness will take my advice, you will get rid of these unlucky camels, and mount yourself according to the established fashion of knights-errant, instead of trotting about the world like Armenian merchants, or pilgrims on their way to Mecca."

I took his advice. On the third day after this passed, we discovered the banks of the Red Sea, having travelled without meeting with any fresh accident, that is to say, without falling in with any music by the way. The sun was just setting ; and I beheld with infinite pleasure the variety of brilliant hues with which its rays tinged the surface of these waters. I could have sworn that a purple carpet had been spread over them ;

for the colour of the sea, and that of the light in which it sparkled, were mingled together in a manner at once the most splendid and beautiful. My secretary, who now kept close to me, asked whether I knew how these waters had obtained the appellation of the Red Sea ; I answered, that I supposed it had been given them on account of their colour.

" Quite the contrary," said he ; " they are no more red than you are ; and since it will be an hour before we reach Florispahan, the capital of Arabia Petræa, I may as well employ the time in explaining this matter."

He had not time to begin his story, before something glittering, which appeared on the water at a considerable distance, attracted my attention. The sun was already sunk beneath the waves, and his last beams illuminating this object, we imagined, at first, that a golden hillock was floating towards us. As it approached, we could perceive an infinity of streamers fluttering in the wind, and at length ascertained that a bark was drawing near us, which was covered with gold from the extremity of the mast to the very surface of the ocean. It was conducted by two dwarfs, extremely black, and extremely deformed. As soon as it touched the shore, there came out a kind of nymph, more ornamented than heaven, and more hideous than hell. While I busied myself in conjecturing how it was possible to be at once so young and so ugly, she threw herself at my feet, and embraced my knees, before I could possibly prevent her.

" Invincible knight ! " said she, " follow me, and preserve the most precious life that ever yet was given to a mortal ! But first swear to me, that however dangerous may be the undertaking, that however disagreeable may be its conditions, you will not hesitate to attempt the deliverance of a beauty, more perfect than till now the universe could ever boast."

Here as she began to weep, I raised her from the ground,

anxious to spare myself the wry faces, which she then thought proper to make: nay, I had already opened my mouth to give the oath required, when my secretary clapped his hand before it.

"Stay one moment, my lord," said he; "before you engage yourself, let me ask this young lady a few questions." Then taking off his bonnet, and shaking his long beard, "Either my name is not Jessamin," he continued, "or you come from the Crystal Island—am I right, sweetheart?"

"Hold your tongue, child," answered she; "my business is not with you, but with your master. Yes, amiable youth!" she added, "it is to you that I am sent. The paragon of beauty has just entered the bath, and unless you are so condescending as to see her come out of it, never must she enter it again! In defiance therefore of your page Jessamin, swear to follow me! Swear to me this, and in return may the dew of morning cool your sweet slumbers; may the zephyrs of evening breathe gently on your cheeks; and may the accents of your well-beloved be as favourable to your wishes, as the cock's crow is grateful to the ear of him, whose couch during the night sleep hath denied to visit!"

These prayers were so extremely kind and acceptable, that I could not think of rejecting the nymph's request. I took the oath, which she tendered, and swore that, happen what might, I would not only see the lady, whom she mentioned, step out of the bath, but afterwards would do my utmost to effect her deliverance. My secretary no sooner heard me make this vow, than he judged it expedient to tear his hair, pluck out his beard by the roots, and utter groans and lamentations the most deplorable.

"Unhappy prince!" cried he; "what evil star conducted you hither to engage in an enterprise, whose event must either prove your ruin, or entail on you everlasting dishonour. None

but a satyr, or the offspring of some Spanish fly, would dare even to think of an adventure, which you have sworn to attempt, but which I will take my oath, you will never accomplish ! However, I have still one means in my power to release you from the vow, which you have just made so rashly ! "

Thus saying, he drew his dagger, and rushed upon the ambassadress, no doubt intending to kill her. I had no difficulty in preventing this act of passion, or in finding words to express, how much I disapproved of his unmanly transport. However, so far was I from exciting his contrition, that seeing me on the point of embarking without him, (such was the law of this adventure,) and finding that I positively forbade his accompanying me, he gave way to an impulse of passion not less violent than unavailing.

" May the sea," he exclaimed, " swallow up the gilded bark, the furbelowed monkey who is just on the point of entering it, and the unfortunate Facardin, who is now preparing to follow her."

On hearing my name, my conductress examined me with a look of surprise, and asked me, if in truth my ~~name~~ was Facardin.

" Why should it not be so ? " said I.

However, not satisfied with this answer, she addressed herself to my secretary, who was still weeping by the water's edge.

" Venerable Jessamin ! " said she, " tell me the truth ; is your master really called Facardin ? "

Hoping that this would be of service to me, he called Heaven to witness, that such was my real name.

" Then let me away without loss of time," said she, " since I possess the invincible Facardin ; but if this stranger is really he, what is become of the other half of him ? "

Not understanding this question, I did not attempt to answer it. The gilded bark made its way with incredible swiftness,

and soon losing sight of that shore on which the inconsolable Jessamin was still venting his lamentations, a quarter of an hour landed us upon another.

This was an immense rock, which rose in the midst of the sea. It appeared to be transparent, and as soon as we disembarked, I perceived that it was entirely composed of crystal. A female, more advanced in years, more splendid in dress, and more frightful in feature than my conductress, came in all haste to receive us.

"Take courage!" cried the nymph of the bark, as soon as the new-comer was within hearing; "I bring what our charming mistress has sought for so long in vain. This is the great Facardin!"

"The great devil!" answered the other; "why, you must be mad, Harpiana, to mistake this shrimp for the invincible Facardin! But no matter. We shall soon see of what stuff this daring youth is composed; and as he seems likely to fail in the very preliminaries, we shall at least have the comfort of seeing him flayed, while they burn the unfortunate Crystallina! Has he taken the oath?"

"He has," answered the first scarecrow, "and so readily, that I am almost sorry for his fate."

"Disarm him then," rejoined the other, "while I announce his arrival to our charming mistress."

"Softly," said I; "a moment's patience, if you please, Miss Monster; let me inform you, that if you pronounce the word 'disarm,' a second time, I shall whip both your ugly heads from off your shoulders."

Thus saying, I displayed my sword: they seemed not a little confounded at a proceeding so unexpected.

"Conduct me," I continued, "immediately to this lady, whom I have sworn to proteet, in order that without loss of time I may deliver her from a danger which appears to be so

pressing. Truly, it would be extremely well-timed to give away my arms, when I come here for the sole purpose of fighting!"

"Flower of chivalry!" said she who had come to receive us, "do as we request, since resistance will be in vain. Give up your arms, and I swear to you by the prophet Ali, the original inventor of green turbans, that if you meet a single enemy with arms, yours shall be restored to you."

I suffered myself to be prevailed upon; and retaining only my sword, which nothing could induce me to relinquish, I followed, wherever these damsels chose to lead me. In my way I observed a number of persons, the singularity of whose appearance surprised me not a little: they were men in female dresses, who being each provided with a spindle and distaff, were spinning with great application, as we passed along. I inquired the meaning of this humiliating masquerade. I was answered, that I was unlucky in not being permitted to increase their number; that all these persons had been adventurers like myself, who having taken the same oath, preferred passing their lives in this degrading situation to engaging in the enterprise at the risk of being flayed, if they failed to accomplish it; but that no choice was left for him who should present himself on the last day of the year (that space of time being allotted for the trial) except to attempt the deliverance of the lady, or be flayed without further delay.

"May I ask," said I, "the nature of this perilous exploit?"

"Our lovely mistress will inform you," answered one of my guides, "as soon as you are presented to her."

It would have been difficult to walk, and, indeed, to keep one's feet on an island of crystal, if the roads had not been strown with diamond dust. It was already night; nor should I have been able to distinguish the several objects which presented themselves, had not the rock been hollowed out with

much labour in various places, where orange trees were introduced, from whose branches large crystal chandeliers and a profusion of burning lamps depended. This made the whole island as bright as if it had been day.

We were situated directly under the torrid zone, scarcely four degrees removed from the equinoctial line. The sun during the day had darted his rays full upon this immense mass of crystal, the air was considerably heated, and not a breath of wind was stirring after twilight. Consequently, I was almost suffocated with heat by the time that I reached the other end of the rock. On the brink of it I perceived a square pavilion, in which both my guides advised me to take some repose. I found there all sorts of refreshment, and hastened to enjoy that of bathing, at the request of my attendants, who assisted me to undress, but who failed in persuading me to commit my sabre to their care, as I scrupled not to do my garments. In vain did they exert their lungs in assuring me that nobody in this world ever bathed sword in hand. All their remonstrances proved fruitless ; I not only entered the bath, but came out of it in this warlike posture. A magnificent night-gown was immediately thrown over my shoulders ; and while I eat of what was set before me, and appeased my thirst with cool and delicious wines, my clothes were carried off by my conductresses.

The day broke. After demanding my clothes without success, I was desired to set forward ; and also was entreated once more to lay aside my clumsy, ill-looking scymitar, which would be totally useless in the business for which I was preparing.

"Pry'thee," said I, "talk no more about my scymitar. As it is, I want only a close cap, a distaff instead of a sword, and a jacket and petticoat, to be dressed like those wretches whom I saw in my way hither!"

Finding me deaf to all entreaties respecting the sword, of which they were so anxious to deprive me, they conducted me without more delay to a bridge, which connected the crystal rock with the most delightful meadow that I ever beheld. Here the two ladies left me. When I had crossed the bridge, two little negroes, even more deformed than those who had managed the bark, closed behind me a brazen barrier, and with a low bow demanded my sword. I answered that this request being particularly disagreeable to me, if they mentioned it again I should be under the necessity of cleaving them from the head to the navel. This threat put them in such terror, that away they ran over the meadow like two black kids. I followed them without hurrying myself, till I came near a palace, which could not well avoid being transparent, for the walls were formed of the clearest and most beautiful plate glass that the world ever produced. Near this palace was raised, by means of golden pegs and cords of purple, a magnificent pavilion. I have since heard that it belonged formerly to the unfortunate Darius, of whom I have the honour to be a lineal descendant.

In this tent, which was open in the front, I perceived a bed, if possible more rich and elegant than that which now contains the charms of the divine Scherazede. These objects would not have given the most distant idea of a perilous adventure had they not been placed in a very disagreeable neighbourhood ; for, to the right of the transparent palace, there was erected a pile of wood, evidently intended to burn some criminal ; and on the left I observed a kind of altar, the four corners of which were provided with iron rings for the purpose of fastening the victim, and with sacrificial knives for the purpose of cutting his throat. Though I never could even form an idea what it was to be afraid, I confess a little kind of inquietude passed through my head like a vapour when I remembered what I had heard respecting the crystal rock. However, no person being in the tent, though

the bed seemed prepared for somebody, I approached the little palace, and here the first light was thrown upon the singular adventure in which I was engaged. Chance had conducted me to the bathing-room. To enter it would have been unnecessary, since I could distinguish perfectly well through the walls what was passing within. Four negresses, more dingy, more flat-nosed, and less dressed than any to be found in the heart of Guinea, surrounded a marble bason, in which, according to all appearances, their mistress was waiting for my arrival to begin the adventure. As soon as they perceived me, these ladies-in-waiting ranged themselves in a line ; and immediately the admirable Crystallina stepped out of the water with as few clothes on as it was possible to have without being stark naked. She remained in the midst of these four ugly old toads a considerable time before they could find anything with which to cover her. This piece of art did not escape me ; but though I conceived that her complexion must be seen to great advantage while contrasted with the horrible figures around her, I own I was much struck with the dazzling whiteness of her skin ; and I looked with contempt upon the perils of the enterprise while I reflected that this uncommon beauty would certainly feel some gratitude for the service which I hoped shortly to render her.

While such were my reflections, the lady and her attendants disappeared I know not how. In a few moments after one of the negresses came to say that her mistress, the heavenly Crystallina, that divinity whom I had just been so fortunate as to see bathing, waited for me in her apartment, where she was just gone to bed, and hoped that I would make haste to preserve her life by my politeness and generosity. Scarcely could I believe that this message, at once so flattering and so free, was not sent for the purpose of making a jest of me.

"The adventure may end as it pleases," said I to myself,

"provided it begins as this obliging ambassadress gives me hopes that it will."

I followed her with great eagerness, and on her part she lost no time. I guessed that she was leading me to the tent of Darius, and no sooner had I entered than it was surrounded by a troop of soldiers completely armed. The nymph Crystal-lina desired me to sit down for a moment at her bed's head ; and being obeyed, she next rang a golden bell. Immediately an old man appeared, whose beard was at least three feet longer than my secretary's ; in his left hand he held a scythe, and in his right a small clock, having placed which on the other side of the bed he retired. To him succeeded two figures still more extraordinary. The first was a sort of high-priest, respectable from his habit, but of an aspect the most ferocious. Among his sacred ornaments was included a great butcher's knife, which was stuck in his girdle, and his beard was even longer than the one which I had just seen. The other was a black-smith, at least so I supposed, from his having a hammer, a file, and a bag of nails ; besides this he held a brazen hoop, on which was strung a variety of rings of different sorts. This hoop he fastened to an iron staple, which was fastened to the floor by a broad plate of gold. The lady from whom this mum-mery had drawn my attention now desired me to make the first effort towards her deliverance by bringing her one of those rings ; that done, the adventure would be accomplished, and I should remain sole master of her person and her treasures. These words made me examine her again, but she was now too close for me to be as much charmed with her as I had been at first sight. In spite of the art which she had used to conceal her beauty's decay, she seemed to be much gone by. I suppose she thought that the suspicion of her being painted occasioned my surprise ; for, in order to show me that she was not, she immediately took great pains to display her arms and

bosom. This convinced me beyond a doubt that she was daubed from head to foot, and she now disgusted me as much as she had enchanted me on her first appearance. However, as I had promised to undertake this adventure, and as all she wanted was one of these rings, I advanced towards the brazen hoop on which they were strung.

"Hold," my little friend, said the long-bearded archbishop, who now perceived that I was armed; "Hold!" said he in Arabic; "who taught you to appear sword in hand in a lady's bed-chamber? Down on your knees, young man, and give me that useless weapon without delay."

I cannot describe, magnanimous emperor, the fury which I felt at hearing this piece of insolence. However, I strove to repress it, lest I should betray myself into some impropriety.

"Mr. Parson!" said I, "what you have just said has been dinned into my ears by all the rabble of this place; and I now assure you, that if such another speech comes out of that bush, which covers your face, I shall strike off your head, and convert it into a scrubbing-brush!"

In finishing this compliment I made my sword whistle twice or thrice about his ears. I soon perceived, that as all these islanders made the same request, my answer produced the same effect upon every one of them; for after ducking several times under my sword, my friend the high-priest took to his heels, and the blacksmith did not stay long behind him.

No sooner were they departed, than I hastened to end the adventure by bringing a ring to the fairy Crystallina, for I supposed that I might have one for the trouble of taking. But though I possessed more strength than the gods bestow upon many, it was in vain that I exerted it, and tried each ring separately; not one could I move. Piqued at a resistance which I did not expect, I redoubled my efforts, but with no better success. At length recollecting Alexander's method of

dividing the Gordian knot, I was going to procure one of the blacksmith's files, when the nymph desired me to resume my place near her.

"It is not on exertions of this nature," said she, when I had obeyed her, "that my safety, and also your own depend. It is evident, that as you now employ it, no strength can obtain for me one of these rings; however, there is a way of disengaging them with as much ease as if the brazen hoop were open. Take breath while I explain it to you, and in the meanwhile examine with attention the furniture of this tent."

I threw my eyes round, and perceived besides the clock and the brazen hoop, a crystal wardrobe and two spinning-wheels. The lady perceiving that I was ready to hear her, addressed me in the following manner:—

HISTORY OF CRYSTALLINA.

Nature bestowed on me those sentiments of prudence and virtue, which in others are merely the effects of education; but with them I also possessed a degree of curiosity, which I never could succeed in repressing. My mother, who wished to preserve me in all the purity of original innocence, suffered nothing male to approach our dwelling. In a short time my curiosity had no other object than the sight of a creature, of whom I only knew the name. In vain was that creature described to me as a horrible monster, who would devour me the moment that I met his eyes. My curiosity daily grew more urgent, and at twelve years old it was so violent, that I resolved to run away, and see a man, cest what it might. Accordingly, one night when the family was buried in sleep, I dropped from my window into the garden, of which I next scaled the wall. I jumped down on the other side at the risk of my life; and all

this trouble did I take in hopes of finding an animal, whom I expected to devour me! I ran like a mad thing across the plains, trembling lest I should be pursued and brought back; nor was it till my security was certain, that I sat down under a bush to rest myself, and wait for day.

Under this same bush a young pilgrim, whom the night had surprised, had also taken shelter.

This I did not discover till the dawn permitted me to distinguish the surrounding objects. He woke at the same time with me, and showed no less surprise than I did on finding himself near me. In spite of my curiosity I was then so uninformed, that I took him for a girl of my own age, whom I conjectured to be a foreigner from the difference of her head-dress and strange cut of her clothes; as to features, I thought (though I was quite as handsome then as I am now) that the stranger's face was even handsomer than my own. For some time we examined each other in silence.

"Amiable stranger!" said he at length, "if you understand my language, deign to inform me where I can find a woman. My father, who inhabits a desert abounding with wild beasts, and who has bred me to the chace from my childhood, permits my engaging bears, wolves, tigers, and wild-boars; but he forbids my trying my strength against that most dangerous of animals, the woman, for he assures me, that nothing can defend me against the poison which it carries about it. I begged him to tell me how this creature is made, in order that I may avoid it, but he would not oblige me: I then requested that I might have a young one brought up tame in the house, but this also was denied me. At length his repeated refusals augmenting my inclination to see one of these dragons, about a month ago I escaped from my father, and have ever since been wandering through the most gloomy woods and frightful deserts in hopes of finding this animal."

My search has as yet been fruitless ; but as your dress declares you to be a foreigner, should there be any women in your country, be so good as to tell me how I may get a sight of one."

" And are not you one yourself ? " said I, much surprised.

" No truly ! " answered he ; " so you need not be afraid of me ; and even should one happen to pass this way, my bow and arrow will be sufficient to protect us."

" But if you are not a woman," said I, " what are you ? "

" A man like yourself," answered he.

In short, Sir Knight, after much surprise and many questions on both sides, our alarm was dissipated ; we found what we had been seeking, and without my being devoured, or his being poisoned, our curiosity was satisfied.

This discovery pleased us so much, and we thought the deceit of our parents such an affront to our understandings, that we resolved to return to them no more. We concealed ourselves for some time in the very depth of the forest, persuaded, that a strict inquiry would be made after us. We knew no other fear than that of being separated ; and I submitted without difficulty, during the two or three first days, to subsist on the produce of my companion's chace, and to have no other retreat for the night than a tree or a cavern.

But my curiosity was not extinguished ; it revived in my solitude, and I grew tired of my situation. I fancied that my new acquaintance was not the only man in the world ; that though he was more beautiful than the day, the world might possibly furnish somebody even more to my taste ; and this idea having once got into my head, I took care to ease my heart of it. Accordingly I proposed to my companion that we should leave the wood, and see a little what was going on elsewhere. He desired no better, and we proceeded together till we arrived at the sea-shore. Neither of us had ever seen that immense element. You must certainly know that it is a very striking

object when beheld for the first time, and we were both of us occupied in admiring it, when suddenly its surface was disturbed by a swell, which seemed to extend itself further than our eyes could reach. At length a dark vapour ascended, which at first raising itself in the air, grew thicker as it fell again, and forming a cloud was driven by a strong gust of wind to the place where we were standing. It wrapped itself round me like a cloak, and then hurried me away with it in spite of my lover's cries, whom I was compelled to leave behind. I perceived that I was borne along with great rapidity, but this gave me not the least uneasiness. I am naturally courageous, and was only angry with the fog, which, I doubted not, prevented me from seeing many things worthy my curiosity. Suddenly it dispersed; the sea opened, and I was swallowed up without suffering the least inconvenience. I now found myself in a spacious grotto, ornamented with that infinite variety of shells which the sea produces, and enriched with enormous pearls, as well as every sort of coral, which it conceals within its bosom. Before I could look about me and recover from my surprise, I saw the faithful Harpiana near me, the same person who brought you in the gilded bark from the shores of Florispanian to the crystal island.

She was dressed much after the fashion of the attendants of Thetis ; that is to say, she was hardly dressed at all. This by no means set her off to advantage, for at that time she was if possible uglier than she is now. She informed me with a low courtesy, that I was welcome to an empire, whose sovereign had commissioned her to show me its wonders, and afterwards to conduct me where my arrival was anxiously expected. Having said this, she led me to a long gallery of crystal, whose roof was supported by two rows of columns covered with coral-branches and mother-of-pearl. When we had traversed it, my conductress inquired whether before I ascended I chose

to see the gallery of shipwrecks. Perceiving that I did not understand her, she informed me, that we were then standing under the Red Sea ; and that this sea being the channel, through which by continual navigation the treasures of India were conveyed to the other parts of the globe, it frequently happened that such as had enriched themselves by long labours, carried the fruit of them to the bottom of the sea, where the different presents made by tempests to the most greedy of elements, were carefully collected, and arranged with order in a particular apartment.

I, who never could deny anything to my curiosity, eagerly accepted this proposal. We now entered a room, where heaps of gold, silver, and precious stones met my eyes on all sides : this saloon was so large, that I could not conceive how the whole earth had contrived to furnish the immense wealth, which filled it. Having admired this magazine for some time, I was conducted into another still more gratifying to my curiosity. This was a chamber less wide but much longer than the first. On one side were statues of gold, silver, bronze, and marble, with furniture of all kinds, and arms of every fashion, either valuable for their quality or exquisite workmanship. On the other side of this saloon stood a row of wardrobes, over each of which were the portraits of a man and a woman, with an inscription underneath. The dresses and ornaments of these portraits were all of different countries. I bestowed so much time upon the first, that the nymph Harpiana informed me, that her master's impatience to see me elsewhere, would not admit of my making so long a stay as would be necessary for my examining the rest. She added, that in each wardrobe were the garments of those whose portraits were on the outside ; that they were all illustrious persons of both sexes, who had perished by shipwreck ; and that likenesses had been taken of the most distinguished, some

having been restored to life, and others painted after their death.

"For example," said she, "two-and-twenty years have passed, since I was drowned in company with the Sultana Fatima, the Grand Signor's favourite, who was carrying presents to Mecca. What followed? She was reanimated on account of her uncommon beauty, and I had the same good luck, in order that I might wait upon her. The Lord of this island loved her passionately, but all his power and skill could not long preserve her from the grasp of death; at the end of six months she was carried off by the small-pox, the only malady over which my master has no power. That is her portrait," added she, "and her clothes are in the same wardrobe."

She opened it, and showed them to me; nothing could be more splendid and elegant. While I examined them, she considered me with no less attention.

"It is the very thing!" said she; "your dress is unworthy of your person, and the Sultana's will be much more suitable. One would think they were made for you; I have already measured you with my eye, and on these points I never am mistaken."

The proposal was accepted. No sooner was I dressed, than my lady in waiting thought me so lovely, that she pressed me to hasten to take command of the empire, of which I was soon to be mistress, and with which I could not fail to be enchanted.

"You will there see the Genius of Genii," continued she, "and will see him at your feet."

"Shan't I see a man too?" interrupted I.

This question surprised her a little; but before she could reply, my demand was answered by the appearance of the personage whom she had mentioned, this Genius of Genii himself in his own person. Impatient to examine his new acquisition,

he had transported himself (though how I know not) to the place where we were, instead of waiting for us above, as his dignity required. His looks surprised without alarming me ; though his make was very different from the pilgrim's, whom I had found under the bush, I had not the least doubt of his being a man. It is true, the other was much handsomer, but then the other was not half so large. Reflecting therefore in my own mind, that man of whom I had heard such terrible things, was an animal in his kind so excellent, I concluded, that the more there was of him, the better he must be : this idea induced me, the first compliments being over, to accept the offers of the Genius, so ignorant was I at that time that it was necessary to preserve appearances.

This ceremony, the only one used in our marriage, being over, he gave me his hand (or rather his paw, for it was covered with long hair to the very tips of his fingers), and aided me in ascending a magnificent staircase. We stopped not, till we found ourselves on the same crystal rock which you traversed in your way hither. Thence I was conducted to this island, and our marriage was celebrated in this pavilion. I was soon disgusted with my new bargain, for the Genii are in general a very whimsical, cruel, ill-made sort of people, and above all are abominably addicted to witchcraft. Though my spouse was naturally fickle, to me he was so eternally faithful and so insupportably fond, that I was ready to die of vexation. To this constancy he united an extravagant degree of jealousy, though of a kind quite peculiar to himself : he wished every body to admire me ; but it made him violently angry, if he suspected me of inspiring any more tender sentiments than admiration. He looked on me as a treasure, of which he was resolved to be the sole possessor ; but he by no means chose to be the only person who could estimate that treasure's real value.

I passed my time very disagreeably with this wretch, whose caprices constrained and whose fondness disgusted me. Harpania was my only consolation. She warned me to conceal an aversion, which her master and mine (dull as he was) might at length discover; and she advised me by redoubled complaisance to persuade him that I was distractedly in love with him, both on account of his personal and mental accomplishments; by which means I should find it an easy task to dupe him, whenever I found a proper opportunity.

I took her advice; and I soon established myself so perfectly in the confidence of the Genius my spouse, that by degrees I became the mistress of his dearest secrets. Among other things, he informed me that there were only three enchanters in the whole universe, whose power was equal to his own; that all three were his inveterate enemies; that each of them possessed a magic spinning-wheel, which in order to render them his slaves, it was necessary to put into the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the world; and that as soon as these beauties should have spun long enough to make a cord able to reach from the top of the loftiest mountain to the surface of the sea, he should attain the utmost summit of his wishes. But till this desirable event could be accomplished, he was in danger of losing the talisman, in which consisted the whole power of his enchantments. However, he added, this talisman was a mystery so well concealed, that there did not exist a human being who had the most distant suspicion of its nature.

He had no sooner said this, than I was dying to know in what this talisman consisted; and I flattered him so adroitly, and timed my caresses so well, that at length I became possessed of a secret which till then he had concealed with the greatest caution from every one.

From the little toe of one his feet he suddenly displayed a

monstrous and terrific nail, or rather claw, which he had the power of hiding at will, after the manner of lions. He then informed me that so long as this nail remained attached to his person, so long was he invincible ; and that even in case of its being separated, it would be easy for him to rejoin it, and thus preserve his power undiminished, unless before he could produce it some one should swallow the whole separated limb down to the nail in question. He told me besides, (for he was disposed to tell me everything, so perfectly was he fascinated by my caresses), that he had contrived to insinuate himself so artfully into the society of the possessors of these important spinning-wheels, that two of them were already the reward of his exertions ; but that these were of little use, unless he could gain possession of the third, which of all the three was the point most difficult to compass.

Upon receiving this mark of confidence, I displayed such unbounded gratitude, that my husband knew not by what means to express to me his delight and satisfaction sufficiently. Perceiving that the sky was overcast, and that the winds were beginning to whistle, he transported me to the summit of the crystal rock, in order that I might enjoy the entertainment of some shipwreck or other, which (he doubted not) would be the fruits of the approaching storm. He told me that it was from the top of this rock that he discovered me for the first time, and caused his spirits to carry me off from the shores of the ocean. He then put into my hand a telescope, not so long as my finger, and yet so miraculously powerful that I could make out the most diminutive objects as distinctly as if they had been close to my feet.

I had no sooner placed the instrument to my eye, than I beheld a vessel in the open sea, the whole crew of which seemed to be already in extreme terror at the storm which threatened them, a single knight excepted. The face of this

stranger was to the full as beautiful as that of my little pilgrim, and his size was almost as advantageous as that of my great booby, the Genius. Suddenly, the storm became so violent that the vessel was swallowed up by the waves, whose fury conspired with the raging of the winds. Not a man of the whole crew escaped, except that stranger, who had already fixed my observation, and who still disputed his life against the assaults of the hostile billows with efforts almost incredible.

The degree of interest and compassion with which this sight inspired me, was such, that I was almost out of my senses. The Genius thought that my transports were occasioned by the excessive delight which I received from this species of entertainment, and was the better pleased with me. He told me that what I had seen was nothing, and that he would furnish me with a much superior kind of amusement: with this assurance, he placed me in a small car upon wheels, taking his seat beside me. It was not without experiencing some uneasy sensations that I felt this machine put itself in motion, and precipitate us from a place, which I fancied to be the loftiest upon earth, into an abyss whose depth I trembled to measure. However, I had not time for many reflections: in an instant I found myself in the crystal gallery; we had entered it at the same place by which I had penetrated into it on my first arrival. From this gallery we could see distinctly everything which passed, as far as the surface of the sea; that is, when the sea is calm, for at that time it was too much agitated to permit my distinguishing anything.

Some time after, we were informed that the tempest had produced nothing but a small bark, ten or twelve mariners, some naval stores, and a horse of value. The Genius, my spouse, having cast his eyes on these poor wretches, gave it as his opinion, that such sorry knaves were not worth the trouble of re-animating; he then begged my pardon for having given me

an amusement so little worthy my attention ; and to recompense me for my trouble in coming so far for it, he suffered me to examine that magazine at leisure, on which at my first visit I had only been allowed time to cast a passing glance. This was an employment exactly suited to my natural curiosity ; and after examining the portraits and various habits of those whose spoils were deposited in the crystal wardrobes, I found infinite entertainment in perusing the histories of their owners. Charmed with the attention with which I examined these different relics, the Genius would gladly have multiplied his treasures and his curiosities, solely for the purpose of furnishing me with amusement ; for, to say the truth, though he was immoderately jealous, he was by no means disobliging. On the contrary, you could not have found a Genius in the whole world more easy to live with, except when the tender passion was concerned.

He left me in the magazine, the faithful Harpiana being commissioned to explain to me such points as would otherwise have been unintelligible. I was gratified by this permission to prolong my examination of the wardrobes and their contents, for it was seldom that he would trust me out of his sight ; and when he *did* leave me for a few minutes to myself, it was only for the purpose of preparing for me some entertainment or other, which sometimes astonished, but never was able to please me.

I cannot tell you how ardently I wished that the sea would bring to us, dead or alive, that unfortunate stranger, who alone had survived for a few minutes the shipwreck in which his companions had perished. I had the greatest desire to take a nearer view of a man who, even at such a distance, had appeared so charming ; for I have already told you, to what an excess I am governed by curiosity ! However, it was in vain that I raised my eyes every moment to the surface of the

waters. The calm, which now smoothed them, still offered nothing interesting to my sight ; and my husband's messengers, who examined every part of the surrounding abysses, returned without discovering more than the miserable remains of the shipwrecked vessel.

The entertainment prepared for me by the Genius, detained us in the crystal gallery the whole of that night. The next day we amused ourselves with fishing for dolphins on the coast of the crystal island. Nothing can be more diverting than this mode of fishing.

A band of excellent musicians (perhaps the best to be found in the universe, as well in point of voice as instruments), was on board the vessel by which you, Sir Knight, were conveyed hither. As soon as it reached the open sea, the music struck up in perfect harmony. The dolphins, who of the whole fishy tribe have the most curiosity, came flocking from all quarters round the glittering bark, in order that they might have a nearer view of it ; and as they have a still more decided taste for music than even for shows, they followed the concert in profound silence, without perceiving (so attentive were they to the sweet sounds) that the bark insensibly conducted them into a long chain of nets, which lined the whole extent of the shore. However, this adventure did not produce any very bad consequences to them : it only cost a few of the most beautiful their liberty. The Genius ordered them to be deposited in some superb reservoirs, where he amused himself with superintending the education of these illustrious fish.

When the bark returned for the third time with its capture, one of the fishermen came to inform us, that in this last haul, he really believed that they had caught the king of the dolphins ; so heavy were their nets, and so brilliant were the variegated scales, which they saw sparkling through the water. But what was my surprise, when instead of this magnificent

fish which we expected, I saw enveloped in the nets the very same stranger whose composure during the tempest, and whose courageous exertions afterwards I had witnessed with such admiration : the armour, in which he was arrayed, was enamelled with gold and azure, and ornamented with an infinite number of precious stones of all kinds and colours.

The Genius, my husband, who knew nothing about generosity, immediately ordered the fishermen to despoil him of his brilliant arms, and then cast him back again into the sea. I looked round for my faithful Harpiana to implore her by looks, that she would find some means of evading the execution of this command ; but she was not to be seen, and I was on the point of interfering myself, when we were informed that the stranger still possessed some remains of life. Upon this, the Genius, who wished to learn his history, in order that it might be engraved upon the wardrobe in which his spoils were to be deposited, ordered his attendants to assist in recovering him. To rescue his life was to preserve mine, so warmly did compassion interest me in his behalf. The succour which was given him, proved so efficacious, that he soon opened his eyes, recovered his spirits, and was upon his legs in less than an hour.

The sight of the Genius appeared to surprise, but not to alarm him. He easily comprehended, that everything which he saw in these enchanted regions belonged to this extraordinary figure. He cast his eyes upon me, but instantly turned them away again, aware that both of us were in the power of one who was near enough to observe all his actions : what effect this single look produced upon the stranger, I cannot pretend to say ; but as to myself, it did my business effectually ! He now returned my husband thanks for the assistance which he had just received, in a manner which, without having any thing degrading or servile, was full of gratitude and insinuation.

It quite softened the Genius. For my part, this compliment appeared to me so ingenious, that I almost fainted away through admiration.

The stranger now proceeded (without giving us time to question him) to inform us, that his desire to achieve so famous an undertaking, had induced him to embark at the port of Florispahan, for the purpose of visiting the Court of Meussellina the Serious ; less indeed from any inclination excited by her reputed beauty, than on account of the glory to be acquired in an adventure so perilous : that on the fourth day of his voyage a dreadful tempest had destroyed his vessel and all his attendants, without his being able to comprehend by what means he had been brought near enough to these hospitable shores to receive assistance ; and finally, that he should feel but little regret at having been shipwrecked, since this trifling accident had been the means of his reaching the dominions of the most magnificent and best-made sovereign in the universe, if it were not that he saw a woman in his company, of all creatures upon earth the one for which he had the greatest antipathy.

This speech, aided by the stranger's agreeable manners, could not fail to be well received by my Genius, for the brute was no less greedy of flattery than subject to jealousy ; and from that moment he took such delight in the stranger's conversation, that he could not exist without him. On the other hand, the stranger affected to shun me on all occasions ; nay, when the Genius (who seldom quitted me) desired him to join our party, he always turned his back towards me, and during the whole time that he remained with us, never addressed to me a single syllable of his conversation. This behaviour made me quite desperate ; for the more that such marked unpoliteness proved that he detested me, the more desirous was I of pleasing him. The Genius was ready to die with laughing, when he saw the constraint which his guest seemed to suffer

in my presence. He sometimes rated him severely for his aversion to a sex which makes the whole happiness of mankind, and repeated, till he was hoarse, the assurance, that if the knight would but once look me full in the face, he was persuaded, that his aversion would be overcome.

The very idea was sufficient to make the stranger run away from the place where I was, as if something most horrible had been proposed to him. At last, so much importunity was used with him, that he consented to look at me once, on condition that he should never be asked a second time. Nor did I neglect to make a great many objections ; as well to mark to the stranger, how much his conduct had displeased me, as to impose upon my husband by the appearance of extreme delicacy : so that the Genius was obliged to hold my head forcibly between both his hands, to prevent my avoiding the glances of his favourite. Oh ! if I *had* avoided them, how much I should have lost ! While my jolter-head of a Genius laboured with both his body and soul to give his friend a fair look at his wife's charms, the eyes of the charming stranger were doing their duty : they assured me, that he was dying for love of me, and that all these marks of antipathy were assumed. This first scene over, its inventor exultingly inquired, what effect the sight of me had produced upon his guest ?

" An effect so disagreeable," answered he, " that if it were to happen frequently, I should utterly lose my senses ! I even doubt whether, in the violence of my delirium, the goddess, your wife, would herself be secure against my transports ! "

I thought I understood the meaning of these threats, and from that moment I felt the greatest inclination to see myself the object of one of these frantic fits ; and all this through pure curiosity !

The Genius, however, was exceedingly surprised to find that the sensibility of the stranger's heart, instead of yielding on

this trial, had only been converted into frenzy. He told him that he was resolved to carry the point ; that he would prove to him, that a woman like me was not a person to be despised ; and that, since the charm of my face had failed to produce the expected effect, those of my whole person, from head to foot, must be called in to their assistance. Was it possible, Sir Knight, for a jealous husband to carry his extravagance further ? Our charming guest appeared to change colour at this declaration, and requested permission to depart that instant, since he preferred leaving the island, rather than consent to give proofs of his complaisance so extremely disagreeable. The better to deceive him, the stupid Genius gave him a promise, that in future he should be let alone, and that no further mention should be made of me and my charms, since he was so horror-struck at a proposal which he would not have made to any other man in the universe. But all these assurances (as I said before) were only made for the purpose of deceiving his friend the more artfully ; and this was the plan which he adopted.

He caused a cabinet of crystal to be made, exactly similar to that which you see yonder. He placed it in the magazine of shipwrecks among the others, after covering it with a curtain of green taffety embroidered with gold. This done, he disclosed his plan to me, which was to shut me up stark naked in the cabinet ; but for fear of accidents, he took care that no one but himself should be able to let me out. I was ready to die with desire to communicate this fine project to the stranger ; but I never could contrive it, so eternally was I teased by the presence of my everlasting Genius. But as the stranger had more wit and penetration than all the strangers in the world put together, I have no doubt but he guessed something of this premeditated surprise, and you will soon see the consequences.

Everything being prepared for this new scene, the Genius, in order to bring it about the more naturally, thought proper to

ask his illustrious guest whether, according to the usage of other knight-errants, he had not provided himself with armour previous to his setting out on his expedition. The other replied, that he well remembered being completely accoutred on the day of his shipwreck ; but he was ignorant what had since become of his arms, his sword only excepted, which those who found him had kindly left in his possession.

" Well then ! " said the Genius, " to-morrow I will show you the only place in the island which you have not yet seen since your arrival here. Perhaps this place may afford you some news of your armour ; at any rate, you will see something or other well deserving your attention. I will leave you alone there, lest my presence should oblige you to hurry over the examination of many rarities, which ought to be revised at leisure ; and I would lay a wager that you never saw anything more curious than what is contained in the glass cases, which you will find ornamented with portraits, and inscribed with the names of those whom they represent."

" And I would lay a wager," replied the stranger, " that there is not among all those names a name half so curious as my own."

" And pray then," inquired the Genius, " what makes this name of yours so curious ? "

" Its novelty," he answered ; " I am called Facardin, and I do not believe there is another person of that name to be found in the universe."

" Oh, as to that, I am quite of your opinion," said the Genius ; " but my good friend Facardin (since Facardin is your name,) in every other respect, I am sure, that you will be quite of mine."

The next day, my jealous spouse locked me up with his own hands in the crystal cabinet. I was in the state which I before mentioned ; and the Genius failed not to expatiate upon

the astonishment which the sight of me would give the stranger, and the amusement which I should receive in witnessing his consternation. I was quite in despair to find that the cabinet was transparent to no purpose, since there was no possibility of unlocking it, either from within or from without. The curtain was drawn before it ; and now the Genius without loss of time conducted his guest into the apartment where I was inclosed, and, according to his promise, immediately left him to himself.

In spite of my vexation at finding myself shut up without any means of escaping, my heart palpitated with impatience, principally from reflecting, that while occupied in examining the other glass-cases, the handsome Facardin might pass mine over, or might not think of drawing away the curtain by which I was concealed. But my uneasiness was soon removed : he came directly towards it ; and without losing the time which my brute expected him to bestow upon the survey of the rest, he drew away the curtain, and appeared so much charmed with the manner in which I was presented before him, that after a few unavailing efforts to free me in a more peaceable manner, in two blows of his sword he broke my fragile prison into a thousand pieces.

As he did not intend to render me this service without reward, and as my heart was filled with a decent sense of gratitude, his curiosity confined itself to those wonders whose knowledge had been forced upon him with so much perseverance ; mine too was so perfectly satisfied, that I thought the whole merit of all the pilgrims and all the geniuses under the sun, must certainly be contained in the only Facardin whom the universe could produce. We soon arranged the characters which it was necessary for us to play, in order to account for the demolition of the cabinet, and we settled our proceedings for the future : though this last precaution was quite useless, as you will soon see.

The charming stranger now took his brilliant arms from the place in which I told him that they had been deposited : arrayed in them, he seemed to be the god Mars, who, quitting the Queen of Beauty, carried away with him all the loveliness of her son. I already mentioned, that he was almost as tall as the Genius ; but this towering stature was by no means a disadvantage, when accompanied by such admirable proportion of limbs. He now left the saloon of shipwrecks, his sword in his hand. The Genius was extremely surprised at seeing him in complete armour ; but he was much more so, when after complaining bitterly of the trick which had been played him, he proceeded to tell him, that as soon as he had removed the green curtain, and seen behind it the statue of a woman without clothes, he was so much shocked, that in the first movements of his indignation he broke the niche in pieces, and was afraid that he had done the statue some injury by a heavy blow, which he had given it with his sword.

Nothing more was necessary to frighten my amorous Genius almost out of his senses, and without replying he ran to my assistance. When he arrived, he found me extended upon the floor, and apparently in a swoon. However, on seeing that I had not received any wound, his fears were tranquillised ; and as soon as I did him the favour of coming to myself, he laughed ready to split his sides at the recital which I gave of the stranger's fury, and of the terrible fright into which his brutal behaviour had thrown me. However, he was by no means pleased that his guest had not given himself sufficient time to examine the whole catalogue of my perfections, before he broke the crystal cabinet ; for my husband's ruling absurdity was an anxiety to make the whole world know the value of a treasure, of which he was himself the sole possessor. I could read in his countenance the determination to bring us together again by some new stratagem : but fortune ordered things

differently. From that day the charming Facardin was not to be found, either on the island which we inhabited, nor on the crystal rock, though during a whole month both were searched for him with the greatest diligence.

The vexation which his loss occasioned me was so violent that I was scarcely to be known for the same person. The merit of him, whose absence I regretted, was of itself sufficient to produce this effect upon me ; still I fancy that curiosity had a still greater influence ; and I strove in vain to console myself for having lost the opportunity of ascertaining whether this stranger would have been as agreeable in a second interview, as I had found him in a first. As the complaisance of my Genius was quite inexhaustible, the ennui to which he saw me a prey afflicted him extremely. He took it into his head that change of air would be good for me, and that in order to amuse me and restore me to my former state of health, nothing would conduce so much as travelling. I was delighted with the plan ; but I was not equally well pleased with the precautions which accompanied its execution. He caused a crystal cabinet to be made, similar to that in which I had already been inclosed ; it is the same which you see yonder. He shut me up (but for this time with my clothes on), took me upon his shoulders, and commenced his travels by traversing the bottom of the ocean. Occasionally we landed to repose ourselves, and take refreshments in the most delightful spots which the shores afforded. On these occasions he never failed to let me out of my glass-case, and resting his head upon my lap, he generally sank into such profound sleep, that I had the greatest difficulty to rouse him, when it was time to recommence our journey.

I had flattered myself at setting out, that during my travels fortune might enable me to gain some intelligence of the excellent Facardin ; but on this head I obtained no kind of satisfaction : and as I was out of all patience at being of no other use

in the world than to serve this brute of a Genius for a bolster, I called to my succour that curioaity with which nature has so plentifully endowed me. It suggested to me the doubt, "whether I could possibly contrive to deceive a jealous husband, who always carried me upon his back well packed up when he was awake, and who when he was sleeping, always slept upon my lap ?" I answered my curioosity, "that I would immediately satisfy it, whether the thing was practicable, or not." With this view I tried whether I could manage to draw my knees from under his ugly head. Finding that I effected this without the least difficulty, and that I could go whither I pleased, for whole hours together, without his ever stirring from the place where I had left him, I seized the very first opportunity of trying whether I could not carry the remainder of my project into effect. I succeeded ; and this appeared to me so amusing, as well from the singularity of the thing as for the gratification of my vengeance, that my curiosity (which was always fertile in novel ideas) persuaded me to persevere in these innocent trials of my skill in artifice, till I arrived at the hundredth infidelity. I guessed that I should find infinite entertainment in the different excuses and cowardly terrors of those whom the presence of the Genius would of course inspire with extreme alarm. I always carried with me yonder hoop, which you see loaded with rings ; they belonged to the persons who assisted me in tricking the vigilance of the Genius, and of whom there was not one who was not heartily terrified. But above all, the two last were the most cowardly chicken-hearted knaves that I ever met with in the course of my existence.

"Trebizonde, my good friend," cried the Sultan, interrupting him, "what was that you said last ?"

"Mighty lord," replied the prince, "I said that the virtuous Crystallina informed me, that having carried her

adventure as far as the ninety-eighth, she received the two last rings, which completed the hundred, from two poor cowardly devils, who almost expired through fright."

"She lied!" said the Sultan; "but go on with your history: we will discuss that point another time."

In obedience to his Sovereign's commands the Prince of Trebizonde proceeded to state, that the Nymph of the Rock continued her narrative as follows:—

The hoop being now furnished with the complete number of rings which I had resolved to accumulate, I grew weary of playing tricks to an animal so jealous and so stupid, and I determined to find some new entertainment for my curiosity. But Fortune, who had favoured me so long, turned her back upon me when I was least prepared.

We had returned home four months and a few minutes; and I was not sorry to find myself in a prison less narrow than that in which I was confined during my travels. The rock of crystal, the pavilion in which we are at present, and the palace of shipwrecks, were all places whose variety presented me at every turn with the most unusual charms: but above all the rest, the saloon which contained the crystal cabinets, was the most agreeable to me, on account of its recalling the recollection of the admirable Facardin. One day I had shut myself up in it with Harpiana, in order that we might talk of that regretted hero without interruption. Harpiana had never seen him; but being entirely in my interests, she was extremely anxious to obtain a sight of him, charmed with the wonders which I related, both respecting his person, and the very gentle manner in which he conducted himself towards me.

We were quite at a loss how to obtain any intelligence of him: for though she had an infinity of sense, and my curiosity furnished me with a thousand expedients, still we never could effect our purpose, surrounded as we were on all sides by the ocean.

"If we had but a sword," said she, "I would go in pursuit of him myself."

"And why is a sword so necessary?" I inquired.

"Because," replied Harpiana, "the golden bark is the only vessel to be found here; and this always remains motionless, except when the Genius himself touches it with his wand, or when any person enters it sword in hand. Now, as we have neither the one nor the other, it is useless for us to think about the golden bark."

I know not what I intended to do with the rings, of which I had made such a fine collection: but it happened that I always carried them about me, without ever thinking of examining them. One day I took it into my head to satisfy this unlucky curiosity, and while I was thus employed, the Genius surprised me.

I was extremely confused. My embarrassment appeared suspicious to my husband. He was astonished at the number of the rings, and asked me how I came by them. As I observed the strange and sudden alteration of his countenance, I was thoroughly aware that this question was dictated by the true spirit of jealousy; and as there is no animal in the whole world so ugly and so terrible as a jealous husband who asks questions, I threw myself at his feet without delay, and requested his forgiveness of a crime which I had *not* committed, in order to conceal from him the fault of which I was really guilty. Accordingly, I confessed that I had stolen them from the cabinets in which the spoils of persons shipwrecked were deposited.

This confession augmented his suspicions; for he had himself laid all those rings aside in another place, and he was certain that there were not above fifteen of them or twenty at most; while on the hoop which he had taken away from me, the number amounted to a full hundred. He examined them

one after another, without finding what he was in search of. However, I was so frightened after the detection of my first lie, that I scarcely knew what I said afterwards ; and he at length guessed so dexterously all the circumstances of my transgressions, that he pronounced my sentence upon the spot. He condemned me to be burned alive at the end of a year, unless in the course of it I could find some adventurer who would remove from the brazen hoop in a single night all the rings which I had acquired during the whole of my travels. No human effort could get them off except one after another ; and it was only in the same manner by which they were obtained, that they could be made to move from the places in which, before the trial was made, the Genius took care to fasten them.

Such was the monster's decree ! His servants were charged to see it executed. He disappeared himself, being engaged by some undertaking whose nature I have forgotten. Ever since, I have sought for a person who, by rendering me so slight a service, would save my life ; but all those whom the golden bark has conducted hither, have basely refused to try the adventure. I always hoped that among those whose succours Harpiana implored without intermission, she might at length meet with the invincible Facardin. He, I am persuaded, would accomplish this adventure : but in vain have I flattered myself with these fond hopes ; Fortune refuses him to my prayers, and hitherto has only conducted to this pavilion the miserable wretches who preferred the occupation and dress in which you saw them, for the remainder of their effeminate existence, rather than even hear of the enterprise in question, after they had seen me come out of the bath. Doubtless, you are already informed of the other conditions, and of everything which relates to them. Time presses ; you are informed of the whole affair ; it is now only necessary to know your determination.

in order that the clock may be set : for twelve hours only are allowed you to finish the adventure. Yet surely to judge by your appearance, to so valiant a knight twelve hours will be more than sufficient, and I shall eternally confess myself indebted to you for my life.

Such was the narrative of the modest Crystallina ; such was the proposal with which she finished it, and my answer was, word for word, as follows :—

“ Fair lady, I promise to do all in my power to deliver, or at least to assist you. My object is to fight your enemies, not to make love to yourself. Without vanity, I may say that I should find it as easy to finish this adventure in another way as by the force of arms ; but as glory invites me to employ my sabre, and as your beauty, all wonderful as it is, does not tempt me to display my prowess in any other manner, I shall immediately cut myself a passage through your butcher, your clockmaker, your blacksmith, your female Moors, your convenient Harpiana, her hideous companions, and the whole mob of your spinning ragamuffins. Now, then, make up your mind whether you will accompany me or not. If you choose to share my fortunes, I will save you from the perils with which you are menaced at the hazard of my life. On the other hand, if you prefer remaining here, in order that you may betray me, I give you my word of honour that, in case of my being attacked, the first head which I cut off shall come from your shoulders.”

The lady between the sheets seemed almost frightened out of her senses at this threat. She sprang out of bed, embraced my knees, and assured me that she desired nothing better than to follow me through the world. However, she implored me to listen to her advice, which would facilitate my enterprise. She then returned to her bed, and told me that she was going to ring the bell at three different times ; that, at the first tinkle, the person whose business it was to set the clock would not fail

to make his appearance, in order to perform his office ; that, at the second, the locksmith would arrive to see how many rings were already taken off from the brazen hoop ; and that, at the third, the sacrificer with the long beard would come running to release me, in case I had accomplished the adventure, or (supposing me to be found unable to complete it) to deliver me over to his servants, till he had leisure to slay me himself ; that these three personages were the most distinguished, the most cruel, and the most dangerous of all those whom the Genius her husband had left to guard her and execute his orders ; and that, having enticed them into the pavilion one after another in the manner which she had just explained, I should be able to do with them whatever might seem to me the best to be done.

"But still," continued she, "though you are sufficiently convinced that violent means cannot enable you to open the enchanted hoop, you may have some doubts whether gentle methods would or would not be more effectual. Therefore, if you like it, you may satisfy your curiosity in this respect, before you have recourse to the other extremity."

"My curiosity?" said I. "Ring, ring, my Lady Crystalina ; my disposition is not quite so curious as yours."

"I never heard a better thing in my life!" cried the Sultan ; "that is exactly what I should have said myself in your situation ; for the more that women are curious, the more it behoves us men to show that we are exempt from such a weakness ! But, pray, go on ; your narrative is so entertaining, that I could pass all my life in listening to you. Well, then, you were standing by the bedside of the Nymph of Crystal, in your night-gown and slippers, and with your sword in your hand, when you told her to ring the bell. You see that I forget nothing. Now, let us hear what happened afterwards."

"Being accoutred," resumed the Prince of Trebizonde,

"exactly as your most sagacious Highness has just described, I placed myself near the door of the pavilion ; but I chose such a position, that the gentlemen whom we expected could not possibly see me till they should have passed the threshold. The curious fair one now tingled her bell, the clockmaker did not fail to make his appearance, and I did not fail to chop his head off. I served the locksmith in the same manner ; and I signified to the nymph by signs that she should now summon the grand sacrificer. In reply she raised her right hand, and, talking with her fingers, she explained to me, that the two officers whose business I had just done for them were appointed to enter the pavilion much about the same time to execute their several functions ; that is, the one to set the clock, and the other to count the rings as they came off the enchanted hoop. They had also the privilege of remaining in the pavilion during the whole adventure ; but she gave me to understand that it would be ridiculous to ring the bell a third time so soon, since the sacrificer could not possibly believe that the enterprise was already accomplished ; and still less, that if the attempt was abandoned in despair, that he should be summoned before there was any necessity. She therefore represented to me that it would be most prudent to wait three or four hours, which would allow us sufficient time to make an opening in the back part of the pavilion, through which we might escape during the obscurity of the night, with less difficulty than by the door, which was always surrounded by a multitude of guards in complete armour. Having given this advice, she let fall the hand with which she had been discoursing.

As my right hand was employed in holding my sabre, I was obliged to make my answer with the left ; but, indeed, I can talk as easily with the one as with the other. I replied, that Facardin of Trebizonde was not used to make his escape

by breaking out of a back door through fear of danger ; that I would have nothing to do with her aforesaid opening ; and that if she did not immediately ring the bell for her Jack Ketch of a pontiff, I was determined to set out in search of him, and send him to join his two scurvy companions.

I no sooner ceased to speak—that is to say, to move my fingers—than hers resumed the conversation. She said that if such was my determination, she at least conjured me to take one of the spinning-wheels in my left hand by way of a buckler; for that the satellites of the Genius, who would infallibly oppose my passage, bore such profound veneration to these machines, that they would sacrifice their lives rather than run the risk of breaking what they knew to be so precious to their necromantic master. This piece of advice was not so disagreeable to me as her former counsels. Accordingly, I laid hold of the spinning-wheel which was nearest ; and the virtuous Crystallina, jumping out of bed and seizing the other, implored me to set forward without waiting for the enemy's arrival ; since, by this means we should stand the better chance of taking them by surprise, and when they were least prepared for an attempt so desperate.

I did not contradict her. We quitted the pavilion of Darius ; and the astonishment of the guards who surrounded it was so great, that I cut down five or six before they had time to recollect themselves. The rest betook themselves to flight, howling most horribly, and I pursued them with rather too much ardour ; for the grand sacrificer, whom I happened to have left behind while I went forward to look for him, quitted the altar which he had prepared for me, and came running after me with a dozen of his attendants, each provided with a great chain for the purpose of binding me neck and heels. Crystallina warned me of my danger by a loud exclamation, which made me turn round. No one dared to approach her, because she took

care to cover herself with the awful spinning-wheel ; and besides this protection, she spun with all her might and main when she found her danger become very urgent. This was an action which the boldest of our enemies dared not behold without prostrating themselves upon the earth ; and during one of these humiliations I took an opportunity of slicing off the head of the confounded high-priest, without respect for the length of his beard or the sanctity of his office.

This once accomplished, what followed was rather a rout than a combat. I killed as many as I could reach, without trifling away my time in making prisoners ; and having traversed the crystal rock without meeting with the slightest obstacle, I assisted the wife of the genius to enter the golden bark. I followed her into it ; and no sooner was I on board than the vessel sailed away as if it had been mad, without asking us whither we chose to be carried. I must not conceal from your Highness, that my joy at having accomplished this adventure was so great, that till we were out at sea I did not recollect my armour. It appeared to me quite disgraceful to leave it behind me by so precipitate a retreat. And being unwilling that the genius on his return should convert my arms into a trophy of my flight, I endeavoured to steer the vessel back to the place which we had just quitted. But the bark paid no attention to me, and in spite of all my exertions we soon reached a landing-place, where we found an abundance of good company, as you will see in the progress of my narration.

I told you that I was extremely vexed at not having been able to regain the crystal rock, in order that I might have rescued my armour ; but my distress was very different, when I perceived that the bark sailed straight towards a shore, which was covered with a multitude of people, some on horseback, some on foot, but most of them superbly armed and accoutred. I could also distinguish in the distance a number

of tents and pavilions, raised in the middle of an extensive plain, and surrounded with lofty trees, whose boughs formed over them a shade, cool, thick, and delicious.

These knights, as well as the populace, astonished at the sight of us, were all assembled on the margin of the sea, and employed in contemplating us with their telescopes, while they expressed increasing astonishment, in proportion as we drew nearer to the shore. I was so completely out of humour at finding myself obliged to disembark in the middle of this assembly (my companion a lady in her shift, myself with a drawn sword and in my night-gown and slippers, and our whole freight consisting in a couple of spinning-wheels), that I was tempted to throw myself into the sea, rather than land in a situation so ridiculous.

To land at last, however, there was no avoiding. So great was my confusion, that I was really to be pitied. I hung down my head; I dared not lift my eyes from the ground, and I knew not where to conceal myself; but the lady was not in the least put out of countenance. She no sooner landed than she began to put her spinning-wheel in motion; and though this action did not inspire such extreme respect as was the case in the Crystal Island, nevertheless those who had witnessed our disembarkation did not fail to assemble round her.

I expected that our reception would have been accompanied by loud bursts of laughter and a thousand jests and sarcasms; but finding myself mistaken, I took courage, and on raising my eyes I was surprised to see that all the men of distinction were accoutred in a mode to the full as ridiculous and extraordinary as myself, though in different manners.

Three of those whom I had seen on horseback now alighted, and advanced to receive us. The sight of two of them first drew a cry of astonishment from Crystallina, and then threw her into such fits of laughter, that she almost burst her sides:

I could not resist following her example. The knight, who first addressed me, told me with great politeness that I did nothing to any purpose, unless I fell to spinning with my own hands. This person was the tallest and best made man that I ever beheld. On his head he wore a fish-kettle instead of a helmet, and by way of a sword a huge spit was dangling at his left side ; but the rest of his dress was brilliant with azure, gold, and gems of incalculable value. His strange dress, and the gravity with which he delivered his remonstrances, would have forced a smile from a criminal upon the rack.

"I need not ask," he continued, "whence you now come ; the golden bark, the princess who accompanies you, and your sword still crimsoned with the blood of a terrible adversary, sufficiently assure me, that both in war and love you are one of the most valiant combatants in the universe, and I congratulate you on your success. But your present adventure, it is not enough to be a hero ; you must also be a buffoon. To be able to make blood flow is a great point ; but it is a much greater to be able to make faces ! Let me therefore advise you to take the wheel from the hands of your companion, and favour us with a specimen of your spinning."

I was in doubt how to take this sarcastic counsel, when my companion (as he called her) came running towards him with open arms.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "my ever-adored Facardin ! Does then fortune at length relent, and restore you to the unabated impatience of my first curiosity ? "

"Crystallina the Curious," replied he, repulsing her caresses ; "different objects suit different seasons ; at present your affairs are not the point in question. What climate throughout the world is ignorant of the conditions of a charm, which this renowned warrior has broken, and what curiosity would not now at length be satisfied ? "

The kind-hearted Crystallina seemed to be somewhat mortified by this reception. However, she was not cast down. On the contrary, with equal rapture she ran to embrace the second knight, though with no better success. He did not even honour her with a look, but repulsing her even more harshly than the other, he turned round and addressed himself to me. He was more lovely than day, and his dress was as follows :—

His brows were encircled with a leather band in the shape of a diadem, from which rose an innumerable quantity of streaming feathers. He wore a cuirass of polished steel, and round his waist was fastened a leather apron tolerably dirty. In one hand he held an awl, in the other a cobbler's last, and at the end of a rope all daubed with pitch hung a shoeing horn. Just as he opened his lips to address me, the third approached to make his bow. I easily understood that Crystallina had no knowledge of this last knight, for her curiosity furnished her with nothing to say to him; still his dress and appearance would have excited the curiosity of any other person.

His stature was by no means lofty, not to say that it was extremely low. He wore a casque which imitated to perfection the head of a cock, the comb forming the crest. On each arm was a kind of buckler covered with feathers, and when these two bucklers met upon his back, you would have sworn that they were the wings of a cock. His cuirass, also covered with similar plumes, represented the bird's stomach; a thick tuft of long feathers bending backwards seemed to rise from his chine; each leg was armed with a gilt spur, fastened just above his ankle; and in order that nothing might be wanting to the resemblance which he wished to produce, he clapped his wing-looking bucklers three times, and imitated the crow of a cock so perfectly, that any hen in the universe would have been completely taken in.

As I could not imagine the meaning of all this, I stopped

the questions, which they were going to ask, by entreating them to tell me in what part of the world we were; why so many persons thought proper to wear such different disguises; and what whim had induced these three in particular to assume their several characters.

"It is not very probable," answered the tall Facardin, "that you should be really ignorant in this respect, since, to judge by your own dress, the same design must certainly have conducted you hither. Still as we are the last arrived except yourself, it is our duty to inquire whether you are willing to engage in this adventure, supposing that you either are or are not ignorant of its nature. If you consent you shall be admitted into our company; otherwise you shall be furnished with everything necessary to enable your prosecuting your journey elsewhere."

I replied that I desired no better than to signalise myself in any adventure whatever; and I gave them my promise to make one among them.

"In that case," said the knight, who was decorated with the shoeing horn, "it belongs to me, as being the last comer, to receive you, conduct you, and instruct you, as to what is going on in this quarter. I shall begin by making known to you the first of those adventures which guided myself hither; but with your permission I will defer my narrative till you shall have rested and refreshed yourself a little in one of the pavilions, which you may perceive beneath yonder trees. Few people are ignorant of the enchantment of the Crystal Rock: you have finished the adventure of the brazen hoop, by delivering the gentlewoman who stands near you. Come then, and refresh yourselves after your fatigues; and while the lady spins beside you, I will tell her an anecdote or two respecting the genius her husband, which will astonish her not a little."

Having made this compliment, the three Knights called for

their horses, and ordered one magnificently caparisoned to be brought for me : the cock was on horseback the first ; and as soon as he was mounted he began to clap his wings, and to crow with all his might and main. When I saw such a figure on horseback, I thought that I should have expired with laughing ; for his steed, frightened out of his wits by these unexpected proceedings, kicked, and jumped, and frisked, and made such a clattering, that the nymph Crystallina (who, according to the custom of the place, had been placed on a pillion behind me) laughed herself into so violent a fit of the vapours, that we had the greatest difficulty in bringing her to herself.

" Fair lady," said the cock, as soon as she was recovered, " I am extremely flattered by your approbation ; but still when we come to the point, I am terribly afraid of failing. As for you, valiant stranger," he continued, addressing himself to me, " I would advise you, as a friend, to take the wheel from this lady, and spin away as usual."

" As usual ? " I exclaimed. " May I be called a traitor and a scoundrel, if ever I spun a thread in the whole course of my life ! "

" Nay, it does not signify ! " replied he, who was to be my master of the ceremonies, and who wore the leather apron ; " only it is as well to practise beforehand."

This said, he gave orders that the rest of my equipage should be brought after me (meaning the other spinning-wheel), and that the golden bark should be conducted to the mouth of the river, on whose banks the pavilions were pitched.

As soon as we were in motion, the strangers and myself began to examine each other again from head to foot. I had already opened my mouth to inquire why they chose to wear their masquerade dresses so long after the carnival, but the Knight of the Awl guessed what I was going to ask.

I perceive, said he, that you are come hither from no premeditated design, though in this extraordinary apparel. That is not the case with us: and since you appear to feel such astonishment at the sight of our arms and dresses, you probably are ignorant of the nature of the adventure which you have just engaged yourself to attempt. I will therefore instruct you in every particular, and lay before you all the dangers which it presents, and the recompense which it promises.

HISTORY OF MOUSSELLINA THE SERIOUS, PRINCESS OF ASTRACAN.

THE King of Astracan (it was thus that the Knight of the Awl commenced his narrative), one of the most powerful sovereigns of Asia, not only on account of his extensive dominions and the gold and silver mines contained in them, but of the valuable chintz manufactures which have rendered his name celebrated throughout the universe.—The King of Astracan, I say, in spite of all his splendour and prosperity, still considered himself the most unfortunate of mankind, for he had no children to whom he might bequeath his sceptre. The Queen, his wife, was young, handsome, and well made; indeed, her whole appearance was so promising, and her flow of health so uninterrupted, that you would have taken your oath that the King's affliction was occasioned by no fault of hers. Accordingly, he never expressed the least displeasure against her personally on this account; and as he loved her passionately, he was not even offended at her laughing all day long at his extreme impatience, and the infinite pains which he took to procure a successor. So many vows were made, and so many sacrifices were offered, to obtain a blessing thus ardently desired, that the priests were perfectly worn out with fatigue;

and as the King believed the whole fault in this business to be his own, there was no end to his baths, and his medicines, and his drinking mineral waters ; for in short he fairly went through all the ceremonies which are prescribed to women, in order to produce fertility. At all this the Queen laughed ready to kill herself, as well as at the vows, the offerings, and the sacrifices which were lavished with so little effect ; yet no one took it amiss that she should be the only person who appeared to be amused by what was considered by the nation as a public calamity. The people knew well that the poor Princess did not act thus singularly out of ill-nature, and that her only defect was that of being the most incessant giggler of the present age ; everything made her laugh, and nothing entertained her. The King, her husband, had been engaged in several wars with the neighbouring sovereigns on this very account ; for whenever they sent to announce some melancholy event (as, for example, the death of an only son), she answered the ambassadors with their long black trains, by such bursts of laughter, that they immediately left the hall of audience in high displeasure, and sent off dispatches to their master, filled with indignant complaints at the gross violation which the respect due to representatives of sovereign majesty had experienced in their persons.

This malady of the Queen's daily strengthening and advancing towards perfection, by the advice of his council the King resolved that she should make a pilgrimage to the famous Oracle of the Cock, and that she should only be accompanied by a small number of attendants, as is usual on these occasions. The temple of this Oracle is at the gates of Fourchimena, capital of the kingdom of Bactria. She arrived there without accident, concealing her name and rank, in order to avoid the ceremony and expense of a public reception.

The King, who had followed her incognito, thought fit to

explain the object of his voyage to the priestess of the temple himself ; and while he was earnestly consulting the holy matron respecting his wife's embarrassment, her Majesty was ready to split her sides with laughing. The Priestess was extremely scandalised at this indecorous behaviour ; however, after a few skips in the air, and some frightful contortions, she delivered the following oracle, as inspired by the sacred cock, her master :

“ That which is wished by the *He-Pilgrim*,
Shall happen ere long to the *She-Pilgrim* :
And both shall laugh,
When the cow has a calf :
But the season which suits the best with laughing,
He, who makes the infant laugh,
Shall laugh the loudest laugh by half in ! ”*

The beginning of this answer was sufficiently explicit ; but the second part was rather embarrassing, and afforded the spectators ample room for exercising their powers of argument and conjecture. The event, however, proved that the Oracle was as good as its word, and indeed better ; for at the end of nine months the Queen produced a son and daughter, of which it was difficult to decide which was the most beautiful ; though it was certain that they were both more beautiful than any child ever was at its first appearance in the world. Unfortunately, the birth of the children cost the poor Queen her life, for in the very act of being brought to bed she died of laughter.

Nothing could have consoled the king for her loss, except the children whom she left behind her, and the pleasure which he found in being able to sit quietly in his palace, without being stunned every moment by immoderate bursts of laughter. But he was not long permitted to enjoy such a happy state of tranquillity. At the end of six months the chamber, which

contained his dearest treasures, was discovered in the night to be on fire. On the first alarm he hastened to the place ; but though every one followed his example, and though numbers threw themselves into the flames in hopes of saving the children, the conflagration was so rapid and so dreadful, that it was only possible to rescue the little girl. The greatest part of the officers of the royal household, who remained in the midst of the fire and smoke till the very last moment, returned at length half roasted, but without being able to save the unfortunate Prince.

This calamity threw the whole kingdom into the deepest affliction. As to the King, he absolutely refused to admit of any comfort ; but Time, who is the universal consoler, insensibly diminished the father's grief, while he gradually increased the daughter's beauty. She was the living image of her mother, except that she was taller, better proportioned, had a fairer skin, a finer complexion, and eyes more brilliant a thousand times. In short, if we are to credit those who have seen her, she is at this moment a thousand times more beautiful than all the other Princesses in the world put together ; but alas ! " he continued, heaving a profound sigh, " it is evident, that they, who speak thus rapturously of Moussellina, cannot have seen all the Princesses in the world ! "

After making this reflection, the Knight of the Awl remained for some moments absorbed in a deep reverie ; from whence he no sooner recovered, than he resumed his discourse in the following manner.

The King, more dazzled with her charms than even his court and his whole people, was never weary of admiring himself in his performance ; and believing her to merit all the crowns in the universe, he was determined not to deprive her of his own by contracting a second marriage. But as it was his fate never to enjoy perfect happiness in his family affairs, this

admirable Princess, whose every glance showered darts of flame around her, and whose whole person and slightest movement displayed graces the most lively and animated, had never yet been known to open her mouth either for the purposes of laughter or conversation ; and it was only when she yawned (which she was much in the habit of doing) that she exhibited gums of a brighter vermillion and teeth of a purer ivory, than ever were till then beheld by the eyes of mortals. The good King, (who, while his daughter was a child, was continually thanking his stars that she was free from her mother's defect,) as soon as she was grown up, would have given half his kingdom to have seen her laugh through the whole four and twenty hours ; so heartily was he wearied of a gravity, which appeared to him even more insupportable than her mother's incessant laughter.

No means were left untried, which might possibly induce her to break this silence, which distressed everybody, and to overcome her solemnity, with which she was out of all patience herself : for it was quite evident from her manners, that every thing entertained her, though nothing could make her laugh : but all means were tried in vain. Philosophers, chemists, masters of languages, and instructors of parroquets, all exerted their talents to make her speak, and all threw away their time ; nor was her gravity less obstinate than her silence. In vain did they collect together all the buffoons and jesters of the kingdom, good, bad, and indifferent : the King even sent for the best company of comedians to be found in all China, where farces are acted in greater perfection than in any other country of the universe ; but they might as well have remained at home. They were not able to twist the Princess's mouth into so much as a single smile.

As it oftens happens, that misfortunes which appear to be past remedy, are frequently followed by others still more difficult

to support, so it proved in the present instance : an event at length occurred, which made the King, the court, and indeed the whole kingdom look as grave as herself. She was fond of all kinds of amusement, but particularly of the chace : a magnificent castle, embosomed in a wide and agreeable forest, and situated at scarcely a day's journey from the metropolis, was the abode which she had selected for the purpose of enjoying this exercise in perfection. She managed her horse like an Amazon ; and in her hunting equipage not only looked as lovely as Diana herself, but was without comparison more dexterous and active.

One day, when the ardour of sport had carried her further than was her usual custom, and when the exertion of killing and pursuing the forest's inhabitants had nearly exhausted her strength, she found herself on the banks of the river, which traverses the forest : it is the same by which your bark is to rejoin us at the shore, whither we are now proceeding. The waters of this river are full as clear as those in which Alexander the Great was so near losing his life, but are by no means reckoned so dangerous. As their qualities were well known, no objection was made to the wish which the Princess made to refresh herself by bathing. Accordingly, she hastened into the water, all covered with dust and perspiration, without giving her attendants time to raise the magnificent pavilion of chintz embroidered with gold and silver, which was usually erected on these occasions.

Her male attendants of course withdrew to a considerable distance, before the Princess began to undress. There only remained with her two of her principal ladies and four maids of honour, who, by the King's order, never left her, because they were the greatest talkers to be found in all Astracan. They followed their mistress into the river, and having placed themselves near her, the neighbouring woods and rocks soon

rung with such a clack, as never was heard before, nor will be again. For my own part I am persuaded, that instead of being induced to talk by listening to these damsels (which was her father's design in placing them about her person), the poor Princess, overpowered by their flux of words, had made a vow never to open her lips, from the fear of resembling them.

Whether this was the case or not, it is certain that the King was soon under the necessity of forming a new household for his daughter : for while she was refreshing the loveliest limbs in the universe in the most transparent and delicious of all possible rivers, these chattering women began to praise her beauty, all at the same time. One exclaimed, that the god of the stream must needs be the foolishest fish that ever swam, to see so perfect a beauty in his bed without giving any sign of his being in existence. Another declared, that poor Jupiter must certainly be grown lamentably old, since he did not think it worth his while to metamorphose himself for the sake of a mortal more charming than all the goddeases put together ; he who had formerly transformed himself into bulls and swans in honour of creatures, who would have looked like so many scullions by the side of a beauty, who discovered through the thin gauze (which formed her only covering) ten thousand charms of the most dazzling lustre !

It is still a question in dispute, whether the god of the river was out of patience at their chattering, or the Deities of Olympus were offended at their impertinence ; but whichever was the case, it so happened, that all on a sudden the waters raised themselves to an astonishing height. Terrified at the prospect of being drowned, the females hastened to regain the bank ; when they beheld close behind them a monster, whose enormous bulk occupied the whole space between the opposite shores. In vain did they endeavour to climb the nearest bank, though the waters nearly placed them upon a level with the

land : they were carried away by the impetuosity of the current, and soon swallowed up like so many frogs by the immense throat of the crocodile, who followed close behind them.

The Princess, who had seen but too distinctly the tragical adventure of her ladies and her maids of honour, had now less inclination to laugh than ever ; especially, as the monster, as soon as he had got his teeth picked by a particular fish, who follows him everywhere for that express purpose, made towards her at full speed. Her first intention was to gain the nearest bank by favour of the waves, which had already made their way over it ; this point once carried, she might easily seize her bow and arrows, which lay at no great distance, and defend herself against the crocodile's attacks. Unluckily, all her male attendants, who upon her preparing to bathe had withdrawn out of respect, were now assembled on the banks of the river, whither the cries of the unfortunate maids of honour had attracted them ; and the princess's modesty made her judge, that it would be by no means becoming to expose herself to their view, covered with nothing more than a few yards of wet muslin. In this extremity, she could think of nothing better, than to endeavour to escape from the crocodile by swimming, and accordingly she lost no time in throwing off her shift, which would have embarrassed her actions. She now exerted herself to the utmost ; but as the monster was but a few yards distant from her, her hopes of escaping were very faint, when her shift floating upon the water attracted his attention. Instantly he seized it ; and as if he had been perfectly satisfied with this precious spoil, he ceased to pursue the fair Princess, and sank under the waters as expeditiously as he had made his appearance.

The river, which had overflowed the banks, while he occupied the bed of it, immediately reverted to its place ; this made

the spectators conclude, that the monster would not return, or at least not till another time : the Princess, who was now stark naked, suffered nothing more than her head to be seen above the water ; for in consequence of what had just happened, her whole suite consisted entirely of men, whom the cries of the poor ladies on being swallowed up by the crocodile had drawn thither. She made signs to them, that they must prepare one of her magnificent tents at some little distance from the river ; and her orders being obeyed, she again made signs, that they should withdraw, and leave her at liberty to quit the bath. She soon reached the pavilion ; and having dressed herself (though without a shift), she took her bow and arrows, rejoined her attendants, and mounting her horse, repaired to the magnificent palace, which she had quitted that morning. In the meanwhile couriers were dispatched to the court, who informed her father of this melancholy adventure.

The king hastened to rejoin her without losing a moment ; he was followed by the whole court ; and by day-break the next morning he found himself in the presence of a daughter, whom he loved as dearly as his own existence ; and for whom the danger, from which she had just escaped, seemed to have redoubled his affection. He wept through joy while clasping her to his bosom ; then he fainted away through terror, on hearing the description of the crocodile. That very day he insisted upon the Princess's accompanying him to the capital, lest the monster should take it into his head to pay them a second visit, and do as much damage on land, as he had already done in the water. The rejoicings, which took place in honour of the Princess's escape, were not universal. Those persons, who were connected either by the bonds of relationship or affection with the beauties, whom the monster had swallowed, were perfectly inconsolable for their loss : the lovers in particular besieged the king with requests, that they might

be permitted to examine the borders and environs of the river, even to its very source, in hopes that an opportunity might be found of avenging the death of their divinities by that of the accursed crocodile. At length he gave his consent, having first resolved to send a body of his best engineers to close up the mouth of the river and prevent by strong embankments the monster's approaches ; at the same time he commanded them to leave the access to the sea open, lest instead of driving him out of his dominions he should enclose the crocodile within them.

The adventurous lovers, who formed an escort for the engineers, marched in two bodies on the opposite sides of the river, and cursed their stars at having already proceeded above half-way without finding any vestiges of that, of which they were in search. At length those who patrolled along the right bank, arrived at a morass, which obliged them to go considerably out of the direct line of march. At the very moment when they were preparing to change their direction, they saw their companions on the opposite shore precipitate themselves into the river. Casting their eyes on the waters, they plainly discovered a piece of muslin floating there ; not doubting that this was the Princess's shift, and that in consequence their allies had discovered the monster's retreat, without loss of time they followed their example : when the perfidious crocodile, who lay concealed among the reeds, with which the marsh was bordered, rushed upon them, and treated every one of them, as he had already treated their relations and their mistresses.

The engineers and their workmen, whose business was not distinguishing themselves by actions of valour or temerity, returned home just as they came : if it had not been for them, no one would ever have known the fate of these unfortunate adventurers.

While the public was employed in lamenting their loss, as

they had already lamented that of their deceased mistresses, intelligence arrived, that this confounded crocodile no longer kept any bounds in the mischief which he committed : he had already laid waste both sides of the river, swallowing up without mercy the cattle and their herdsmen, who (not having yet heard of this strange incident) continued to water their flocks and herds there as usual. In a short time after, it was perceived, that there was an alarming diminution in the city of all kinds of provisions, as well as of all those articles which are necessary to maintain the luxury and magnificence of a metropolis, and which were usually brought thither by the river from all parts of the globe. On inquiry, it appeared, that the monster, lurking (as I said before) among the reeds and rushes, with a single spring from the marsh into the river, sent all the vessels full of merchandise to the bottom, where the poor wretches on board of them immediately became his prey. It is not ascertained, whether he had been told, that women are naturally more tender than men; but it is certain, that he had quite another kind of greediness for the fair sex than for ours.

The King of Astracan was so completely overcome by such a rapid succession of misfortunes, that he scarcely knew where to turn himself: however, he did not as yet know the whole extent of his ill-luck.

The lovely Princess, when she quitted the capital, had no less than three hundred and seventy four dozen of shifts under the care of her deceased first lady of the wardrobe. At her return, not one of them was to be found, nor could she by any possible pains ever get any more made to suit her. After ransacking all the shops both in town and country, and trying every kind of muslin, cloth and linen, she was at length obliged to make up her mind to wearing no shift at all, though nothing in the world appeared to her more uncomfortable: however,

there was no resource, for all the new shifts which she tried on, seemed to be bewitched : those, which she wore during the day, took away her appetite, and those, which she wore during the night, would not suffer her to get a wink of sleep.

The King, more affected by this new distress of his daughter's than by all his other afflictions put together, thought that in this extremity nothing better could be done, than to send the great officers of the crown with magnificent presents to the oracle of the Cock.

The priestess of the temple received the officers extremely well, and their presents still better : but she informed them, that some time had elapsed, since the Cock set out to pay a visit to the great Caramoussal, and that it was only in the vicinity of Mount Atlas, that they could be satisfied respecting those matters, which they had come to investigate in the vicinity of Fourchimene.

Though the King their master was extremely vexed at this delay, he kept up his courage ; and only allowing them the time absolutely necessary for making preparations for this second journey, he dispatched the same ambassadors with three hundred elephants laden with presents of the finest chintz and linens to be found in his dominions. To give the embassy a still greater interest in the eyes of the enchanter Caramoussal, he caused it to be accompanied by his own band of musicians ; though (as those say, who have heard them) these same musicians are more likely to turn the heads of those who are not accustomed to them, than to afford them any entertainment.

I was on the point, said the Prince of Trebizonde, of telling him, that I could speak from my own knowledge on this subject ; but my companion did not give me time, continuing his discourse as follows :—

The Satraps of Astræan, said the Knight of the Awl, set forward with their bales of chintz, their three hundred

elephants, and the same number of monkies. They skirted along the boundaries of the Taurican Chersonesus, traversed the two Armenias, and at length arrived at a forest, where they were very near being deprived of a great part of the presents committed to their care. I already informed you, that the three hundred elephants carried immense bales of the most beautiful chintz that the universe could furnish : on the top of each of these packets was placed a monkey ; though what the King their master imagined, the wise Caramoussal could possibly do with three hundred monkeys is more than I can tell you. However, whatever were his motives, he had commanded his Satraps above all things to be careful not to lose a single monkey by the way.

The forest, which it was necessary to traverse in order to reach the place of their destination, was so full of deer, hares, and other beasts of chace, that they were obliged to have recourse to their music for the purpose of obtaining a passage. No sooner did the band strike up, than the animals scampered away on all sides, and vanished in a moment, to all appearance more alarmed than if all the hounds and huntsmen in the universe had been hard at their heels. However, this first success was shortly after very near producing the greatest of all possible disasters, by procuring for them an entrance into the forest ; for no sooner were they in the midst of it (the trees being all either apple, walnut, or almonds) than the monkeys, who from the backs of their elephants required only a single spring to reach the very topmost branches, as if by general consent, skipped away in a moment.

One of them alone remained behind, a baboon, the most noble in his manners, and the most elegant in his shape of all baboons, past, present, and to come ! Unfortunately, he was so melancholy in his disposition, that during the journey the Satraps could not occasionally refrain from tears at contem-

plating the sadness, in which he appeared to be plunged. Far from skipping about, and imitating the tricks and gambols of his companions, he passed the greatest part of his time in reading: if he was interrupted by any accident, immediately he was observed to recline his head upon one of his paws, sink into a profound reverie, and then suddenly cross his arms upon his breast, raise his eyes to heaven, heave the deepest sighs, and shed such showers of tears, that the spectators found it impossible not to keep him company.

He had quietly resumed his book, as he reposed upon his elephant, while his companions scampered about the forest, making such a noise and uproar, that all within hearing were ready to go distracted. The caravan was obliged to halt during three whole days, for the purpose of re-assembling them: nor could they be persuaded to quit the trees, till they were perfectly glutted with all kinds of fruit. After all, the whole number did not return, for three died of an indigestion produced by eating too many almonds, and in a few days afterwards the gripes carried off three more, who had stuffed themselves with green apples. In this emergency, all that the ambassadors could do, was to flay them, and stuff their skins with straw, in order that the number might be complete, which the king had charged them to present to the celebrated Caramoussal.

As soon as they reached the foot of the mountain, a courier was dispatched to give notice of their arrival, and to inquire, whether the Enchanter wished them and their whole equipage to set forward for his dwelling; or whether he preferred their making the caravan encamp in the neighbourhood, till he should issue his commands respecting the manner in which he chose to receive the presents, with which they were entrusted.

At the end of three days the courier returned, and informed them, that Caramoussal was not to be found at the place, which

he usually inhabited : he was in retirement at the very summit of Mount Atlas, a situation perfectly inaccessible to all of them, except the monkeys : he concluded by saying, that he thought it necessary to make thus much known to them as soon as possible, in order that they might determine on their proceedings.

Upon hearing this, the ambassadors resolved to leave the presents under the care of their attendants at the foot of the mountain, and to endeavour to reach, as well as they could, the place whither the Enchanter was supposed to have withdrawn.

They travelled during a whole fortnight, always going higher and higher by the most difficult road that ever was known, without finding any thing but rocks and precipices. At length, after having bestowed many a hearty curse upon the crocodile, who was the occasion of giving them all this trouble, as well as upon his Majesty's preference which had caused him to select them for this honourable employment : at length, I say, they perceived the road to become less difficult and dangerous, though they still continued to ascend. Here and there they found little vallies watered by delightful streams, whose banks were embellished by a profusion of wild flowers. Arriving still higher, they observed birds of a kind perfectly unknown to them, and even small pavilions were scattered about in various places. At the distance of six hundred furlongs more, they found that there was no means of mounting higher ; and here it was, when they could see nothing above them but the clouds, that they encountered the far-famed Caramoussal.

He came from a pavilion considerably larger than those which they had observed by the way : on one side it was shaded by an innumerable quantity of orange trees, and surrounded on the other by various machines sustaining quadrants, telescopes, and all kinds of instruments, which are used in contemplating the movements of the stars. He was followed from the pavilion by a man, whose arm was supported by a scarf. As the

ambassadors were evidently in doubt, which of the two was the person of whom they were in search, the Enchanter advanced towards them, and inquired very politely, what the great King of Astracan desired of Caramoussal? On hearing this, they prostrated themselves before him, as if he had been some divinity; for his appearance inspired them with quite another kind of reverence from that which the report of him had prepared them to conceive. They expected to see the hideous form of a sorcerer, or at best some old man with a long beard, and bent double by extreme decrepitude. Consequently, they were greatly surprised to see a tall personage, who, though somewhat upon the decline of life, had still a most noble air and majestic figure, which was displayed to considerable advantage by the magnificence of his habit.

He immediately caused them to rise; after which they disclosed their business, explained the nature of those misfortunes respecting which they came to consult him, and finished by enumerating the presents which they were commissioned to lay at his feet.

After listening to them attentively, he conducted them, before he gave any answer, to a part of the mountain whence the ocean was visible, and whence indeed the whole earth would have been visible if human eyesight could have stretched itself so far. They were quite terrified at the prodigious height at which they perceived themselves; the islands which rose above the sea appeared like little black spots, and the largest vessels like so many floating atoms. It was now that the Enchanter addressed to them the following discourse:—

“ I am far from being what I am believed to be by the greatest part of those who only know me by a reputation, which I certainly by no means deserve to have obtained. It is true that long reflections, continual speculation, and perhaps the proximity of the celestial bodies, have enabled me to acquire

great insight into whatever is most infallible in astrology. I will even allow that there is less certainty in the answers returned by most oracles than in my conjectures and predictions. Respecting that of the Cock from whom they have referred you to me, or rather whom you have been advised to seek in my abode, his divinity is henceforward out of the question ; other cares and other occupations engage his attention.

"Observe," continued he, "the distance between the place which we now occupy, and the billows which break against the mountain's base. If the king, your master, could collect threes certain spinning-wheels which are dispersed about the world, he might then possibly obtain a cord long enough to reach the surface of the ocean from the summit of Mount Atlas, on which we now stand. This accomplished, he would enjoy the completion of all his wishes. The monster would disappear for ever ; the Princess would laugh and talk ; and these spinning-wheels would spin for her a shift even finer than that which she has lost, and which she might wear without danger to either her appetite by day, or her repose by night. But as it is impossible that the King of Astracan should ever possess these enchanted spinning-wheels all at the same time, listen to the advice which I shall now give him, in order that he may preserve his territories from total desolation, and may give the most lovely Princess in the world the only thing which she wants to render her the happiest and most accomplished. Let him publish everywhere, that whoever can vanquish the crocodile, or make his daughter laugh, shall be rewarded either with the hand of the adorable Moussellina, together with the kingdom of Astracan, or with the whole strength and power of the king, her father, to enable him to complete any other conquest which he may have in contemplation. Should the adventurers fail in making the Princess laugh, they may still be permitted to encounter the monster ; for whether they begin by the

monster or by the Princess is a matter of absolute indifference. All persons, of whatever rank or appearance, must be allowed access to the lady ; and once in two years she must not fail to make a journey of a couple of months for the purpose of exhibiting her divine beauties in the different provinces contiguous to the dominions of the King, her father. Now, then, farewell, illustrious Satraps," continued he, " restore to the sovereign who sent you the magnificent present with which he has thought proper to honour me. Caramoussal desires no other reward for the services which he performs than the pleasure of having rendered them."

" But suppose," inquired his companion, who carried his arm in a scarf—" suppose the bow and arrows should be among their presents, or in the possession of their attendants ? "

The ambassadors, who had paid no attention to him till he made this speech, now cast their eyes upon him, and were struck all on a heap at beholding a mouth so prodigiously large, that, in point of enormity, that of the royal Fortimbrass could not possibly exceed it. Caramoussal, without attending to their astonishment, prevented the protestations which they were going to make, " that they did not possess a single bow and arrow in the whole equipage," by addressing himself as follows to the stranger with the wide mouth and his arm in a scarf :—

" It is not so near this place," said he, " that you can hope to find the arms which you mention."

He then took leave of the ambassadors, who rejoined the caravan in much less time and with much less trouble than it had cost them to obtain a sight of the great Caramoussal. As they had been absent for a considerable time, they ran over the list of their elephants, their monkeys, and their bales of chintz. The numbers were found to be complete, with the exception of the melancholy monkey, who, within the last week, had disappeared, though in what manner those who had

been left to take care of the baggage were unable to say ; neither was it possible to obtain any tidings of him, in spite of all the researches which they made in the neighbourhood. The Satraps were much grieved at his loss, and still more at not having been at least able to find his carcase, in order that they might have stuffed it, as they had done those of his six companions. However, there was no remedy, and they set forward upon their journey homeward.

On the sixth day, after going considerably out of their way, in order to avoid the wood so fatal to their monkeys, an adventure took place, which at first embarrassed them extremely, though it terminated very much to their satisfaction. They perceived at a distance several camels escorted by a body of men well armed. As the chiefs of the party seemed to be persons of consequence, and as they concluded that camels so carefully guarded must needs be loaded with something singular or precious, as soon as they were near enough to be heard they ordered the music to strike up in honour of the strangers. No sooner did this infernal concert begin, than its effect was visible on every man and beast among those for whom this compliment was intended. Above all, the camels flounced, kicked, and capered as if they were crazy, and threw the whole caravan into confusion. In their extreme agitation they threw off their loads, and these in falling burst open the cases of certain lions and tigers, whose appearance was by no means agreeable to the serenaders, for they came right towards them, and some of the musicians paid with their lives for wanting agility in making their escape.

The elephants, however, behaved extremely well on this occasion, and the monkeys extremely ill ; for while the first kept off the wild beasts with their trunks, the second rent the air with screams of terror, and dirtied all the bales of chintz on which they were sitting. It was at this moment that the pride

of all the monkeys in the world appeared from behind the corner of a rock, which had hitherto concealed him, and astonished all the Satraps by his un hoped-for arrival. He was armed with a bow and arrows. He selected one for each wild beast, and with an unmerring aim pierced their hearts, one after another. As soon as he saw them all stretched upon the earth he quietly drew out his arrows, saluted the Satraps, and then vanished among the rocks which bordered the plain as suddenly as he had made his appearance.

In what manner the ambassadors, and the escort of the lions and tigers separated, I am not informed. But it is certain, that the former, on their arrival at the court of Astracan, having delivered to their master the answer and advice of the great Caramoussal, the king, under the sanction of his counsel and with the consent of his daughter, caused to be published everywhere the conditions, on which all adventurers were permitted to enter the lists and aspire to the possession of the most beautiful Princess under heaven, and one of the most powerful kingdoms upon earth.

Since this publication, Fame has carried the report of the Princess's beauty further than even the danger and singularity of the two adventures, by which her favour is to be obtained. She has not failed to visit all the neighbouring provinces by turns during a journey, which she makes yearly for two or three months. All who have seen her, either during her travels, or at her father's court, have found her beauty greatly to exceed its reputation; and the greatest part of them, seduced by the splendour of her charms and by expectations so brilliant, have endeavoured but in vain to fulfil the required conditions. Such, noble stranger, added the Knight of the Awl; "such is the occasion of our being assembled here, and such is the adventure, which your word binds you to attempt.

At the conclusion of this narrative we found ourselves on the banks of the river, where my eyes were astonished by the most singular and magnificent sight, that I ever beheld.

But the remainder of the Prince of Trebizonde's adventures may as well be deferred, till you read the second part of these memoirs.

PART II.

" And by and by the second course
Comes lagging like a distanced horse."

SOAME JENYNS.

" I INFORMED your majesty," continued Facardin of the Crystal Rock, (for such was the title assumed by him upon delivering Crystallina the Curious), " I informed your majesty, that on the banks of the river I was destined to behold a sight, the most singular and magnificent : but upon recollection it strikes me, that it may possibly make my narrative more intelligible, if, before I describe the nature of that sight, I relate the events which occurred previously."

" I am quite of your opinion," replied the Sultan, " and give you great credit for the idea, which is equally novel and just. Proceed therefore in your own way ; hitherto your adventures have amused me much, and I shall be delighted to hear the conclusion of them."

" And so shall I with all my soul ! " exclaimed Dinarzade ; " but I fear, there are as yet but little hopes of such a blessing. However, go on, Prince Facardin, since his Sublime Highness will have it so ; but for the love of the prophet, make as much haste as you can."

The Sultan here gave the divine Scherazade a slight kick to wake her ; for during the history of the Princess of Astracan she had fallen fast asleep, and was snoring as loud, as if her life had depended upon it. Though not over pleased at the

interruption of her slumbers, she was prudent enough to restrain her anger ; well knowing from the temper of her illustrious husband, that if she did not keep her tongue between her teeth, she possibly might not long keep her head between her shoulders. The Sultan was going to recapitulate the latter adventures for her information ; but Scherazade requested him not to give himself that trouble, assuring him, that she was as perfectly free from the curiosity, as from the other defects of Crystallina. Schahriar (I know not why, for he never thought proper to tell me) seldom heard this lady's name mentioned without giving some token of displeasure ; he immediately turned his back towards his beautiful Sultana, and ordered Facardin to proceed with his history, which he did in the following terms.

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCE OF TREBIZONDE.

I was very much prepossessed in favour of my new companion by his noble countenance and graceful deportment : that prepossession was confirmed by the amusement afforded me by his conversation, and by a peculiar manner of expressing himself, which gave value to the most insignificant trifles. I listened to him with inexpressible pleasure, and thought, that the charms of his natural eloquence were not a little set off by a set of the whitest teeth that I ever beheld. Being naturally open and conversible, I soon gave him to understand that I felt interested in his fate ; and finding, that our sentiments of esteem were mutual, we vowed upon the spot eternal friendship, and promised to communicate our adventures to one another with the very first opportunity. I shall not fail to recount them to your exalted Majesty in their proper place.

(The impatient Dimerzade gave a deep groan on hearing this promise ; but the speaker paid her no sort of attention.)

Such discourse (continued he) conducted us to the banks of the river, where an infinite number of pavilions formed of the richest and most beautiful chints, informed us, that the Princess Moussellina was already arrived. In spite of the numerous company in which I found myself, (of which certainly not a member seemed to have met with a more fashionable tailor than myself,) I could not help feeling rather embarrassed at the idea of appearing thus singularly accoutred before so illustrious an assembly. The attendants of the Princess, as I had already been informed, consisted of the principal Satraps and most distinguished characters of the court of Astracan ; and as I have remarked, that people of the highest rank are generally people of the worst manners, I made no doubt, that I should be ridiculed most intolerably. In this I was mistaken : the deliverance of their mistress from her tedious gravity was a point of too much consequence to permit her attendants to be merry on the subject. On the contrary, they loaded us with compliments upon the extreme absurdity of our appearance ; and I could perceive, that my companions were as much delighted to be thought ridiculous upon *this* occasion, as they would have been offended upon any other ; such is the influence of circumstances.

I must not, however, omit to mention, that the Knight with the Awl did not participate in this delight. Absorbed in profound melancholy, it seemed scarcely a less difficult task to make *him* smile, than the Princess. Yet his conversation was so lively and entertaining, that being naturally addicted to gaiety, I was frequently ready to die with laughter. Not so my companion ; while he amused all around him, his own countenance remained perfectly unaltered ; he uttered a *bon-mot*, as if he was announcing some misfortune, and whenever

he favoured us with an epigram *impromptu*, I always expected to hear a funeral oration.

I could not help remarking to him the inconsistency of his conduct :—"Your business here," said I, "is to make the Princess laugh : instead of which, if she has but one grain of sensibility in her whole composition, the moment that she beholds you, she will burst into a flood of tears. I doubt not, that the gloomy melancholy, in which you are absorbed, is occasioned by your love for Moussellina, and by your fear of being compelled to resign her perfections to some rival : but however such proofs of your inward attachment may flatter the vanity of that lady's bosom, they are by no means likely to operate upon the muscles of her face."

"You are not the first by many," replied my new friend, "who has made the same remark ; and I own, I have but little hope of succeeding in the first mentioned adventure. As far as regards myself, I doubt not, that the Princess will look all her life, as if she were an undertaker's apprentice : however, if I cannot make the lady laugh, I hope at least to make the crocodile cry, and that will answer my purpose just as well."

"But," said I, interrupting him, "are you not desirous yourself, that Moussellina should get rid of a little of her everlasting gravity ? Why, your marriage ceremony will resemble the nuptials of a couple of screech-owls ! Your contract will be dripping wet with the Notary's tears, and the Mufti will not be able to read the service for sobbing ! "

"You have guessed right," rejoined the stranger, "in supposing the cause of my melancholy to be love, but you have mistaken its object. My intention is not to obtain the hand of the Princess in marriage, but to purchase for myself a claim to the king of Astracan's assistance, and for my brother the possession of a woman, whom he loves most ardently. Yet even should my hopes be crowned with success, how shall I then

proceed to obtain the object of my dearest wishes ? Where shall I seek, what I never yet have found ? How shall I find her, whom I never yet have lost ? And how, oh ! how shall I join my existence to that of a fair-one, who perhaps never had any existence at all ? "

These questions were much too difficult for me to answer ; and the stranger having sunk into a profound reverie, I forbore to interrupt him. We therefore proceeded in silence towards the tent, which was prepared for the reception of all those adventurers, who aspired to the conquest of Moussellina's gravity. The time appointed for this trial (as I was informed by one of the satraps our conductors, with whom, in order not to remain quite idle, I entered into conversation on dismounting from my horse,) was still at the distance of four days, when also the two months appropriated for Moussellina's absence from Astracan would be completed ; after which (should no one have succeeded in the adventure) she would return to her father's as solemn as ever, and leave the crocodile to pursue his riots undisturbed.

The tent to which we were conducted, occupied at least half a square mile ; it was separated into a multitude of apartments by panels of painted chintz inclosed within frames of massive gold. I remarked, that all the figures, which adorned these singular walls, were pourtrayed in the most ludicrous attitudes, and represented in the act of laughing heartily, doubtless from the hope of inspiring the princess with an inclination to imitate them. In my own mind, (but I took care to keep my opinion to myself,) I was decided, that his Astracanical majesty had judged ill on this point ; for the faces made by these merry figures were so distorted, that it was very unlikely, that his daughter would wish to resemble them : not to mention, that as some of them were represented in the act of standing on their heads, it might possibly not have been thought quite

consistent with her Royal Highness's dignity to appear in a similar situation.

Each of the pretenders to Mouscellina's hand (for the satraps insisted upon reckoning me among these merry rivals,) was conducted to a separate apartment : to my infinite satisfaction I found, that the lodging of my new friend was appointed next to my own. My conductor, having ushered me into my chamber, opened a wardrobe well stored with robes, turbans, and other articles of dress. He then informed me, that as the grand trial would not take place for some days, I had better not throw away the advantage of novelty ; but laying aside for the present the laudable absurdity of my appearance, he advised me to make a choice among the various garments, with which he then presented me. I lost no time in following his advice : and while I exchanged my bed-gown for a magnificent robe of silver tissue, I informed the satrap, that I by no means aspired to the hand of his mistress ; that I would make faces before her with all my heart and soul, and might and main, if my doing so could be of the least use to her, or her illustrious father : and that it was so long since I had met with anything of the kind, that I should think killing the crocodile an extremely good morning's entertainment : but as for the Princess herself, I begged leave to declare with all possible respect, that it was exactly the same thing to me, whom she married, or whom she refused.

"Upon my word, Prince," interrupted Dinarzade, in a voice equally expressive of anger and contempt, "you are strangely indifferent about women : "

"By no means strangely," answered the Prince with a smile ; "nothing can be more natural. Nay, I will even own to you, that there is but one woman in the world, of whom I have a very high opinion, and she is"

"For the love of heaven, who is she ?" cried Dinarzade eagerly.

"A perfect stranger to you," rejoined the Prince, "and I mean that she should remain so : but more of this hereafter : at present I resume my narrative."

I was just finishing my dress (and doubtless my companions were employed in the same manner,) when Crystallina bounced into my room without ceremony. She seemed greatly agitated, and very soon poured forth such a torrent of words, as made the astonished satrap's ears ring again. She insisted upon her right to be presented to the Princess, and ordered the satrap to conduct her to the royal tent without delay. The lord chamberlain being sent for to decide the difficult question, "whether as the wife of a Genius she was entitled to an *entre à court*," he immediately decided it against her ; assuring her, that no Genius, or any one belonging to a Genius, was permitted to remain in the kingdom of Astræan.

"For my own part," continued his lordship, "I was fortunately born with a natural antipathy to Geniuses of all kinds. I thank my stars I never saw more than one in my life ; and though he was an extremely dull one, he still contrived to make such a disturbance in the court of Ispahan, that the king swore by the poppy-coloured whiskers of Mahomet's fifth wife (his most solemn and irrevocable oath), that in future no Genius should dare to smell roast meat in his dominions. You see, therefore, my dearest madam," added his Excellency, shrugging his shoulders in the most fashionable manner, and bowing to the very ground ; "you see that it is quite impossible for me to oblige you. I am absolutely in despair at my refusal ; but I trust the reasons which I have done myself the honour of laying before you will be found equally strong and satisfactory."

Crystallina, dying with curiosity to see this much celebrated Princess, answered the chamberlain with vehemence so audible, that it soon drew a crowd of listeners around her. But in vain

did she talk herself hoarse in explaining, that though married to a Genius, she was anything but a Genius herself: the chamberlain was obstinate, and she could obtain nothing further from him than an admission "that though she might very possibly be no Genius, she certainly came under the description of a white witch." Having said this, he was on the point of retiring, when his eyes rested on the ebony spinning-wheel, which Crystallina still carried, and which, in the most eloquent parts of her oration, she occasionally menaced to discharge at his Excellency's head. No sooner did he perceive this machine than he started back, and whispered his deputy, who whispered the mufti, who whispered the Princess's nurse, who whispered the body-physician, who whispered the lord chamberlain again, and then they all whispered together.

It was thus that I stood with my incensed companion surrounded by a circle of whisperers, who seemed engaged upon something of the most serious nature. Crystallina was ready to burst with curiosity to know what they were saying, and begged for an explanation in the most urgent and pathetic terms. After a full quarter of an hour the conference ended; and the chamberlain advancing towards us, was on the point of addressing the lady, when he fixed his eyes upon me, who, for want of something better to do, was amusing myself with turning the handle of *my* spinning-wheel. No sooner did he perceive it than he started back a second time, and whispered his deputy, who whispered the mufti, who whispered the Princess's nurse, who whispered the body-physician, who whispered the lord chamberlain, and then the whispering began all over again.

This second conference lasted much longer than the first; but I need not inform your most sagacious majesty, that one way or other everything must come to an end at last; so was it with this whispering. It ceased; and then advancing to

Crystallina with an air equally polite but much more respectful than before, the chamberlain informed her that he was ready to conduct her to the royal tent. Dreading lest he should change his mind a second time, she took him at his word. In vain did I beg her to consider her singular appearance, and assure her, that since the days of Eve no woman had gone to court in her shift. The chamberlain was too impatient to conduct her to Moussellina to allow time for changing her dress ; and as Crystallina was just as well pleased to be seen in her shift as in any other way, she soon quitted my apartment, and hastened towards that of the Princess. Thither I followed her, but not till I had been prevailed upon to carry my spinning-wheel along with me.

The night being already far advanced, we found Moussellina's tent illuminated by so great a quantity of torches of rose-coloured wax, that day itself would have been far less brilliant. I could not avoid remarking that each of these torches issued from the beak of an immense golden cock, richly ornamented with rubies and emeralds ; and the Knight of the Awl whispered me, that this bird was held in profound veneration throughout the dominions of Astracan.

The Princess was seated upon a throne of silver, overshadowed by a canopy hewn out of a single emerald. She was attended by twelve ancient females, and an equal number of the principal satraps, and was occupied in receiving the pretenders to her hand. I will not attempt to describe the charms of this adorable personage ; suffice it to say, that her eyes effaced the splendour of the torches which blazed around her ; and that when she opened her mouth by accident, her breath was so sweet and balmy, that my head being naturally unable to support perfumes, it was with the greatest difficulty that I kept myself from fainting away.

The tent being already crowded by the multitude of her

admirers, we, as the last comers, were obliged to wait till the others had been presented. She received them in a very gracious, though somewhat solemn manner, permitting each of them to kiss her alabaster hand; but she spoke to no one. As soon as the King, or Prince, or whatever he chose to call himself (for I suspect that many of these dignities were entirely of their own creation), was announced, she signed to her nurse, a venerable woman about sixty, who stood at the foot of the throne. Immediately the old lady put her lips in motion, and as soon as she had pronounced a few civil sentances, her mistress nodded three times, as much as to say—"she has hit it":—the knight then retired to make room for his neighbour, who went through the same ceremony.

I asked a grave-looking old satrap (he had the most enviable pair of mustachios that ever I set my eyes upon!) whether by chance it had not been her Royal Highness's pleasure to be born dumb? He assured me very positively of the contrary.

"For," said he, "though she has never been heard to utter a syllable, she cannot possibly be dumb, as she perfectly understands everything that is said to her."

This argument was so irresistible, that I had not a word more to say upon the subject. I afterwards inquired who was this able logician? I was told that he was the president of the Royal Astracanical Society; I could not but acknowledge that he was well entitled to fill such a place by his whiskers.

Near four hundred knights had already been presented; and now Crystallina impatiently requested the lord chamberlain to perform his promise. He hesitated not to obey her, and giving her his little finger with the most graceful air imaginable, he prepared to lead her towards the throne; when the sentinels, who guarded the entrance of the pavilion, rushed into it suddenly with looks equally expressing apprehension and

surprise, and exclaimed, that the sky exhibited a sight the most extraordinary. It was indeed that very sight which I have already had the honour of announcing to your majesty.

This information was more than sufficient to rouse Crystallina's curiosity. Without considering the impropriety of her behaviour, she darted out of the tent, and in her hurry overset the unlucky lord chamberlain. Shocked at her rudeness in quitting this noble assembly so abruptly, I ran after her to bring her back, and (as he lay directly in my way) made bold to tread upon the lord chamberlain in passing. The knights, the satraps, the guards, the old women, and at last the Princess herself all followed my example, and never since the days of the deluge was a man of the lord chamberlain's rank so be-kicked and be-trampled.

The Princess was the last person to quit the tent. However, as soon as she reached the door, the crowd respectfully opened, and she passed through the midst of us with as much speed as her gravity would admit of her using ; that is to say, upon a moderate jog-trot. Her attendants, one and all, assured me that she had never been seen to move along so nimbly before. For my own part, I could not help observing something constrained and ungraceful in her manner of moving ; but I suppose this was occasioned by her being without a shift, and certainly cloth of silver next to the skin must needs feel extremely uncomfortable.—But to proceed.

And now with one consent every eye was fixed upon the heavens. What was our astonishment at beholding an immense ball of fire, which every now and then burst into a multitude of little stars, and then as suddenly collected itself again into one blazing mass. We made various conjectures respecting this phenomenon. They were all extremely ingenious ; unluckily, none of them were right. However, as the flaming ball seemed descending towards us, we at length agreed unanimously that

the most likely means of ascertaining what it could possibly be would be to wait till we could distinguish what it really was. This was the suggestion of the whiskered philosopher. It met with universal approbation ; and I could perceive that he was himself not a little proud of having struck out so luminous an idea.

Though extremely curious to know the cause of this singular appearance, my attention was not so much engrossed as to prevent my observing, that one of Moussellina's women was considerably agitated at the approach of this flaming ball. She endeavoured, indeed, to conceal her emotions as well as she could, though it was considerably increased upon her finding that my eye was fixed upon her. The cause of her alarm had by this time arrived so near us, that we could distinguish the particles of which it was composed. But if we felt surprise at its first appearance, how was that surprise augmented, when we found the light to proceed from the mouths and eyes of an innumerable number of flying tigers, who appeared to act as guards and lanthorn-bearers to personages still more extraordinary than themselves.

Imagine, most illustrious Sultan, a cock considerably larger than a full-grown turkey, his eyes sparkling with a brilliance far exceeding that of the finest carbuncles, his body adorned with a thousand beautiful colours, and his neck encircled with a chain of enormous emeralds.. Seated upon this uncommon courser, and guiding him by the chain which served as a bridle, we beheld a gigantic monkey, who held a bow of polished steel in one hand, while with the other he governed his chanticleer with more grace than could have been expected from the very best bred baboon in the universe. On his back hung a golden quiver adorned with precious stones ; and upon a crimson velvet pillion behind him sat a little old woman so hideous, that we all exclaimed with one voice that the monkey was by much the

handsomest animal of the two. It was with the utmost difficulty that she kept her seat, so long was her body and so short were her legs. Her nose was so little and snubby, that it was not to be seen without a magnifying glass ; but to make up for this deficiency, her chin was so immoderately long, that it curled over her mouth, and rested its point between her eyebrows. She squinted so horribly, that the earth had full possession of one of her eyes, while the other was the property of the heavens. Her ears were of such a length, that to keep them from flapping about, she had been obliged to tuck them into her girdle. However, she had taken care to deck them out with a very smart pair of ear-rings ; and her hair, which was of a flaming red, was frizzled up as high as a tower, and plastered all over with flour and hog's lard. To set off this charming face and figure to the best advantage, she had a little scarlet turban ornamented with a profusion of feathers of all possible colours, and stuck upon one side of her head coquettishly ; while her person was enveloped in a travelling dress of deep yellow velvet, trimmed with a broad gold lace, and flounced and furbelowed with cat's skin. When I add, that her breath was so strong, that we needed all the perfume of Moussellina's to overpower it, your Highness may form some idea of the charms which ornamented this masterpiece of nature and art.

These extraordinary personages continued to descend, and as they approached inspired us with very justifiable apprehensions, a flight of fiery tigers being by no means the most agreeable visitors. The event proved that our alarms were without cause. When they arrived within a few yards of us, the escort remained motionless in the air, while the cock lighted on the ground not far from Moussellina. The monkey sprang nimbly out of the saddle, and taking the old woman in his arms, placed her upon her feet with the greatest care and

delicacy. She seemed greatly fatigued with her journey ; but as soon as she recovered her breath, she advanced towards the heiress of Astracan, and addressed her as follows :—

“ Illustrious Princess, you behold an ambassadress from the great Caramoussal. He requests you, through me, not only to receive with kindness, but to treat with profound respect, this paragon of all earthly monkeys. Here only can he expect the cure of that melancholy under which he now labours, and here has Caramoussal engaged that he shall obtain it. Farewell, lovely lady ! May the chin increase, may the foot be diminished ; may the spinning-wheels turn, may the rope be woven ; and, oh ! may your beauty never subject you to the same misfortune, which my unlucky charms have entailed upon your most obedient and very humble servant.”

As she said these last words, she burst into tears, and while she sobbed most piteously, she made such abominable wry faces, that all the beholders were ready to expire with laughing. It was then that the Princess rejoiced in her immoveable gravity. She alone kept her countenance, and endeavoured to apologise by signs for the ill-breeding of her company. The nurse explained this to the old woman in very polite terms ; adding, that Moussellina requested her to repose herself in the royal tent after her journey, when she hoped that she would relate her adventures, as she was extremely anxious to know the birth, parentage, and education of so extraordinary a person as she appeared to be, and also to hear some account of the great Caramoussal who made presents of monkeys to Princesses. The stranger accepted the proposal, and the whole company returned to the tent ; but the old woman would not begin her narrative till she had thrown herself upon her knees before the monkey, and demanded his permission. The animal (who really seemed to be the best tempered and best bred of the monkey kind) gave his assent in a very gracious manner ;

then throwing himself upon the embroidered carpet, he seemed to be absorbed in profound melancholy.

In the meanwhile, the old woman, having past a few minutes in silent reflection, a precaution highly necessary in relating so long a history, began her narrative in the following words:—

HISTORY OF THE MATRON OF MOUNT ATLAS.

"YOUR Royal Highness," said she, addressing herself to Monsellina, "is probably not aware that our families are nearly connected. The queen, who had the honour to die in giving you birth, was no other than——"

The old woman had proceeded no further in her tale when her eyes rested upon me. She stopped, and suddenly starting from her seat, she hobbled towards me.

"Sir Knight," said she, "what is your name?"

"It is Facardin," I replied.

This singular name appeared to excite surprise in everybody, except in the inquirer, and in the tall knight with the fish kettle upon his head; to whom the old lady now made the same demand respecting his name.

"My name?" answered he with an air of perfect indifference, yawning at the same time; "it is Facardin."—The general wonder redoubled.

"And yours?" resumed the old woman (after a moment's pause) addressing herself to the Knight of the Awl.

"It is," replied he with a low bow, "it is Facardin."

"Facardin!" screamed out the old woman (in a voice so shrill, that it almost cracked the drum of my ears; at the same time giving three skips in the air with such activity, as was truly surprising in a person of her age and figure,) "Facardin? Facardin?—One Facardin—two Facardins—three Facardins

—One Facardin more, and one Facardin less ; then all for a time will be wrong, and all will at last be quite right."

Having said this, she darted out of the pavilion, sprang nimbly upon the cock, and giving him a slight kick, he rose into the air, and instantly disappeared, old woman, flying tigers, and all. It may not, however, be improper to remark, that the foot with which she kicked her chanticleer, was the smallest and most elegantly formed, that I ever remembered to have beheld.

Great was the general disappointment at the matron's abrupt departure. We trusted, however, that the monkey would supply her place, and continue the relation of those adventures, in which his companion had made so little progress : but here our hopes were again frustrated. In vain did we promise him pig-nuts and bilberries ; in vain did we threaten him with whips and chains. To our utter surprise, the monkey seemed not to understand us. We thought that he might probably be a foreigner, and tried by turns every language in use throughout the habitable globe ; but with no better success. Say what we would, not one syllable would the monkey answer ! at length we were obliged to agree with the opinion of the whiskered philosopher ; who in a speech of three hours, replete with the most sublime eloquence, most learned disquisitions, and arguments the most logical and irresistible, proved to us very clearly, —“that whatever sceptics might advance to the contrary, the monkey was actually a monkey.”

The Princess, however, was still persuading the animal not to be as provokingly silent as herself, when Crystallina (impatient to have her presentation over) was led forward by the deputy chamberlain ; for as to the chamberlain himself, he was too much bruised to appear again that night. Instead of attending to Crystallina's compliment, I was not a little surprised to see the Princess suddenly seize her by the corner of

the shift, and examine the mark of it with great eagerness and attention. She then shook her head, and with a deep sigh let the linen drop again. After this strange behaviour, she seemed to recollect its impropriety, for she blushed deeply, and was signing to her nurse to make an apology, when she discovered the spinning-wheel, which Crystallina, during the ceremony of presentation, had deposited upon the carpet.

" That is mine ! " cried the Princess, seizing it eagerly, " and have it I will, that 's positive ! "

The joy of the whole court at hearing her speak for the first time was only equalled by the rage of my fair companion : but without minding her reproaches, the Princess began to spin with all her might and main, when she stopped her work for an instant, in order to address herself to me.

" Spin ! " said the Princess ; for though she had thus unexpectedly gained the power of speech, she was not yet able to use it fluently. " Spin ! "

In vain did I protest, that I never had spun a thread in my life. Moussellina would be obeyed ; and the whole court repeating in full chorus—" Spin ! "—I even set myself to work with the best grace that I could. But scarcely had I turned the handle twice, when a third wheel was seen at the top of the tent, and a pair of beautiful white arms passing themselves through two holes in the chintz hangings began to turn the machine with incredible swiftness and dexterity.

While the general attention seemed engrossed by this phenomenon, mine was employed upon a different object. Enraged at her having been thus plundered by the Princess, Crystallina had retired in dungeon to a distant corner of the pavilion, and was busily engaged in conversation with that identical ancient lady, who had expressed so much emotion at the sight of the flaming ball : but their discourse did not long continue undisturbed. The monkey had raised himself from the floor quietly:

he advanced with caution towards the talkers, and having crept behind them unobserved, he suddenly sprang upon the old lady's back, and fastened his teeth in her left ear. The duenna screamed, cried, kicked, and struggled : but in spite of her efforts and those of the spectators, the animal maintained his hold, nor quitted it, till he had fairly dissevered the ear from its adjoining parts. No sooner was her head deprived of this natural ornament, than her form dissolved into a cloud of smoke, but soon collected itself again into the figure of an enormous giant, who rose with angry looks into the air ; the roof of the tent opened, and the Colossus disappeared. At the same moment the beautiful hands vanished ; Crystallina fled shrieking from the tent ; and the monkey slipping off his skin with as much ease as if it had been a great coat, there was seen in his place a man about five and forty, of a most noble presence, and whose features (except his mouth) were truly prepossessing.

But oh ! that mouth ! Mahomet, what a mouth ! Your Majesty may possibly think, that a feature so out of all proportion was likely to excite merriment in the spectators ; but no ! terror was the effect produced upon all present by this miraculous mouth ; and when he opened it to address the Princess, so terrible an abyss was presented, that the poor little soul involuntarily jumped back, and we had some difficulty in convincing her that she had not been swallowed up alive ! In truth, had the stranger felt any wish for such a mouthful, I am certain, that he could have bolted her Royal Highness without any difficulty ; for I would have betted ten to one, that his mouth could take in a full grown ox, horns and all, without troubling itself to make more than a moderate stretch. But I must beg leave to observe that I do not mean an ox bred in Lincolnshire, which kingdom (as I have read) produces that animal uncommonly large, but merely such

ordinary sized oxen as are usually found in your Majesty's dominions. I thought it right to mention this, as I by no means approve the fashion of those rhodomontading travellers, who exaggerate matters in order to excite wonder, when in fact nothing can be more ordinary and natural.

" You are quite right," observed the Sultan, " and I much admire so scrupulous an attention to veracity. But pray, go on with your history ; for as you have told us what could go into the stranger's mouth, I am quite impatient to know, what could come out of it."

You will naturally suppose, proceeded Facardin, that from so capacious a mouth we expected a tremendous voice, and words every one of them composed of at least ten syllables. However, it soon appeared that the stranger's voice was like any other voice, and that he had not the slightest objection to—"ifs,—ands,—ofs—or alsos." As soon as Moussellina had recovered from her fright, he announced himself to her as Fortimbrass, King of Denmark, brother-in-law to the merry Queen of Astracan, and consequently uncle to the mournful Princeess. She gave him a very affectionate welcome, and permitted him to salute her roseate cheek ; but it was observed by all, that when his monstrous mouth approached her, the poor little Princess shook like an aspen leaf.

We were all impatient to hear the adventures of this monkey-monarch, which we doubted not, would include those of the frightful old woman. Fortimbrass begged us to suspend our curiosity till the next day, as he was greatly fatigued, having galloped all the way from Mount Atlas (upwards of seven thousand leagues) in two hours and a quarter. We could not deny the plausibility of this excuse, and we soon after separated for the night ; Fortimbrass rejoicing that he had got rid of his claws and tail ; the courtiers, that the Princess had been induced to speak ; and Moussellina, that

she had not only recovered her own spinning-wheel, but through my means possessed another besides it! Of both of these wheels she requested me to take charge, adding, that the next day we would resume our work. The whole company then retired in perfect good-humour, except the nurse, who was somewhat chagrined at the reflection, that in future she was only to talk for herself. It is true that because her mistress had recovered her voice, it did not follow, that the nurse had lost hers : but the old lady knew well that being old and ugly she might talk to all eternity without a soul listening to her, and that she thought, was almost as bad as not talking at all.

Facardin of the Grotto (for such was the title of my new friend) followed me to my apartment. Here he introduced me to his brother, who was no other than the knight with the fish-kettle for a helmet. He was certainly much handsomer than his brother, and his person was truly noble and majestic : but the countenance of my acquaintance was so amiable, and bore so strong an expression of mingled sense and sweetness, that I hesitated not for a moment to give him the preference. As soon as the first compliments were over, I begged Facardin of the Grotto to gratify my curiosity by relating the cause of his bearing the same name with myself. With this request he complied in the following terms.

HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF THE GROTTO.

IT is impossible for me to tell you where and in what manner I was born ; since, though it was a ceremony in which I sustained a very principal part, the circumstances have as completely slipped my memory, as if they had never happened! neither can I tell you, who were my parents, as, in spite of all my pains in looking for them, I have been able to meet with no relations, except my brother, whose ignorance on this

subject equals my own. The earliest period which I can recollect, found me the inhabitant of a subterraneous grotto, under the care of an old hermit, whom I called father, but who, I have more reasons than one for believing, had no right to that appellation.

This singular person was by birth a Chinese, and his name had formerly been the Mandarin Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim. He possessed extraordinary abilities, and not only gave me daily proofs of his being a prodigy of wisdom, but was even at the trouble of assuring me of the fact himself. Unluckily, the extravagant kindness, which nature had shown in forming his intellectual parts, was fully counterbalanced by her stinting him in his externals. The poor Mandarin was born with but one eye, one ear, one nostril, one arm, and one leg : the latter was placed in the centre of his body, which turned round upon it as if upon a pivot ; and to such perfection was he arrived in the management of it by dint of practice, that he could hop upon his one leg nearly as fast as any other person could run upon two.

It was long before his parents could pitch upon a proper wife for him ; till at length a female appeared at the court of Pekin, who seemed formed by nature for the express purpose of supplying all the deficiencies of the young Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim. She called herself the lady Fim-Foam-Fum-Fi ; and as he was entirely made up of unities, she on the other hand was composed of nothing but quinquities ; for she had five arms, five legs, five ears, five eyes, and five nostrils to each of her five noses. As with such a person she was not pestered with too many admirers, she readily accepted the addresses of the young Mandarin : but alas ! it soon appeared, that her name was not more the reverse of his, than the temper of Fi-Foam-Fum-Fim was opposite to that of Fim-Foam-Fum-Fi ! he was gentle, and she was passionate ; he was wise, and she was

silly: he employed his single hand in no offices but kind ones; while she was persuaded, that nature had given her three additional legs and arms for no earthly purpose than the better to enable her to thump and kick her husband. At length, however, one fine sunshiny morning, the Mandarina took it into her head to die, and the Mandarin took it into his to bury her. It was shortly after this event, that a revolution in China obliged him to leave that country, and one of his friends having entrusted me to his care, he took refuge with me in the island of Serendip.

His acquaintance with the Mandarina Fim-Fum-Fi, of lamented memory, had made him an inveterate woman-hater, and he endeavoured to communicate his aversion to me. His labour was thrown away; I sighed ardently to behold one of these terrible wild beasts (for such he had taught me to fancy them) neither could all his arguments erase this wish from my mind, any more than a singular accident, which occurred to me when scarce sixteen.

I was sitting in the grotto one evening, and endeavouring to persuade my governor to let me have at least one peep at these monsters, when suddenly a large black cloud descended into the cave. In a few minutes it dispersed, and I beheld a stranger of noble and commanding presence, who held in one hand a golden wand, and permitted the other to serve as a perch for the largest and most beautiful cock that I ever beheld: it struck me this evening, that it was the very same bird which brought hither the King of Denmark; but of that I cannot be positive. No sooner did the hermit perceive the cock, than he sank upon his one knee; the bird extended its right wing towards him, and he kissed it with every mark of affection and respect. The stranger then conversed with the Mandarin in some language unknown to me; but their eyes sufficiently testified that I was the subject of their discourse.

It lasted about an hour, after which the stranger prepared to depart; but first he addressed me in these remarkable words:—

“ Youth, be in all things submissive to your venerable protector, but in nothing more than in abstaining from the sight of women. Know, that as I lately consulted the stars respecting you, I read in them this threatening prediction: ‘The first object which he loves, he shall love for ever! The first object which he loves, shall for ever prove cold and insensible; and even though that object should be in his possession, he never shall be united to the first object which he loves!’ Remember this, be prudent, and be happy. Farewell!”

As he uttered these last words, a shower of tears fell from the eyes of the beautiful cock; at the same moment a cloud wrapped itself round them, and they quitted the grotto in the same manner as they had entered it. This incident for a time made an impression upon me; but reflecting that there was little danger of my feeling any sentiment like love for a wild beast, I resolved to gratify my curiosity, and see a woman, let the danger be what it might. Accordingly I escaped from the Mandarin Fi-Fum-Foam-Fim, and after a fruitless search of some days, I stumbled upon the fair Crystalline, whose curiosity was not a jot less urgent than my own. What passed till we parted, as well as the adventure which separated us, you probably have heard from that lady; it would therefore be unnecessary to relate it now.

Here Schahriar interrupted the Prince of Trebizonde, and requested him to repeat those adventures, as he had so happy a knack at forgetting what was told him, that they would seem to him exactly as if he had never heard them before; a talent upon which he seemed to value himself prodigiously. However, Dinarsade begging with tears in her eyes that the Prince-

might be suffered to get to the end of his long-winded history (if, indeed, such a thing was possible, which she began to doubt), the Sultan was prevailed upon to suffer him to proceed. He did so, as follows :—

Facardin of the Grotto continued thus : I had for some time flattered myself that the oracle respecting my future fate had been completely mistaken ; it was, at least, certain that Crystallina had been anything but cold and insensible. But now that we were parted, I discovered that the sentiment with which that curious dams^el had inspired me, had nothing to do with *love*. So far was I from being grieved at her departure, that I rather rejoiced at no longer having a woman continually at my elbow, with whom I had found full leisure to be satiated. The gust of wind which divided us so obligingly, bore me swiftly through the air. It deposited me unhurt at the foot of a mountain, whose base was bathed by a rapid river. It was night ; the moon was at its full, and its beams enabled me to discover a small island at no great distance.

I was in doubt what course to pursue. The island seemed uninhabited, and the mountain did not wear an aspect much more promising. While I hesitated, I observed something moving on the shore of the island. I strove to distinguish its figure, but in vain. After a few moments it plunged into the water, and seemed to be hastening towards the mountain. Not to be deficient in good-breeding, I advanced to receive the new-comer ; but my politeness instantly vanished on perceiving, that it was nothing else than an old lion, whose bulk and looks were truly tremendous. My doubts were now removed ; I immediately took to my heels, and began to climb the mountain with all possible expedition.

As the lion did not pursue me, I soon slackened my pace. It now for the first time entered my head, that this exploit of mine was by no means to my credit, and that to begin my

career by running away was but a sorry presage for my future fame. I therefore determined to return and face the lion ; and drawing a sabre with which I had provided myself on quitting the grotto, I measured back my steps. I confess, that as I drew nearer to the lion's neighbourhood, I felt my eagerness to engage decrease very fast ; and at length I could not resist peeping over a piece of rock, in order to observe his motions, before I attacked him. He was stretched at his full length just below me, reclining his head upon his left hand. He sighed frequently, and at intervals wiped his eyes with his tail, which served him for a pocket-handkerchief. He was in such evident distress, that I thought it quite cruel to disturb him, and resolved rather to deprive myself of the honour of cutting off his head, than intrude upon his sorrows by giving him an opportunity of biting off mine.

While we were in this position, my attention was attracted by a light, which glimmered upon the top of the mountain. At first, I thought that it was a paper kite with a lanthorn tied to its tail ; but on its descent I discovered the light to proceed from a fiery car drawn by two flying tigers. In this sat a man splendidly habited, and I recognised with surprise the stranger who had told my fortune in the Mandarin's grotto. He was accompanied by a lady, the elegance of whose form gave me great curiosity to see the face belonging to it ; but this was impossible, in consequence of her head-dress, which was the most extraordinary ever worn by woman. It was no other than the enormous cock, which I had seen in the grotto, and which placing a claw upon each of her shoulders, overshadowed her face with his wings, while his tail streaming down her back, formed a lappet very tasty and ornamental.

As soon as the car touched the earth, the Enchanter aided his companion to alight. Instead of expressing terror at the sight of the lion, she hastened towards him ; while he, upon

hearing her steps, reared himself upon his hind-legs, and (as I imagined) prepared to spring upon her. I already gave her up for lost ; but to my great surprise I found, that if he devoured her at all, it was likely to be with kisses. The nymph repaid his caresses with interest, though she was evidently so much affected that she was ready to faint. The lion, however, who seemed to have all his wits about him, made haste to feel in his left ear for a smelling-bottle, with whose contents he proceeded to bathe her nose and temples. When I saw him prepare for this charitable office, I felt no little concern for the poor lady, as I thought him by no means calculated for the employment, and doubted not that his claws would flay her nose completely. I was, therefore, much pleased to find that the considerate beast was aware of this danger, for he poured a little of the lavender water upon the tip of his bushy tail, and then chafed her nostrils with the greatest success and dexterity.

The nymph being recovered, the lion now paid his compliments to the Enchanter, and afterwards shook the cock by the right wing in the most hearty and affectionate manner. The whole party then sat down on the banks of the river, where the magician seemed to endeavour to console the other three ; but to judge by the tears that were shed, his eloquence was not very persuasive. In about an hour the party broke up : the members of it took a most affecting leave of each other ; after which, the lion, throwing himself into the water, returned to his island, while the Enchanter and the nymph (still wearing her singular head-dress) returned to their car : it rose into the air, and disappeared on reaching the summit of the mountain.

Supposing that this same mountain must serve as a retreat for the Enchanter, I resolved to ascend it, and endeavour to find him out. He had formerly appeared to take an interest in my fate, and I thought it possible, that he might give me some intelligence respecting my parents ; a subject on which the

Mandarin had always preserved an inviolable silence, and which I was extremely anxious to get cleared up. I fancied, that I should feel awkward upon entering the world, if on being interrogated respecting my family, I should find myself obliged to answer—"Upon my honour, Sir, I know no more about it than yourself." Accordingly, I set off in pursuit of the Enchanter, and at length reached the mountain's summit; though not without being twenty times on the point of breaking my neck by the way.

I now found myself at the entrance of a spacious grotto, adorned with statues, shells, and a variety of other ornaments, rustic, it's true, but disposed with infinite taste. In the middle hung a bird-cage composed of jet and ivory, and in one corner stood the enormous cock, employed in turning with great gravity the handle of an ebony spinning-wheel. I thought this occupation extremely unprofitable, for the foolish bird (who probably had been ill taught) had neglected to put any flax upon the distaff.

As the grotto had another outlet, I was proceeding to try my fortune further, when I heard the voices of persons approaching. I drew back, and soon after saw the Enchanter enter, leading the same lady, who had expressed so singular an attachment to the lion. They were accompanied by a stranger, whose person I need not describe to you, as he was no other than the Giant, the loss of whose ear disenchanted Fortimbrass this evening, and who (by the bye) is also Crys-tallina's husband. In one hand he held an enormous club, and the other sustained a gilded tobacco-pipe, from which he occasionally puffed clouds of smoke in the face of the Enchanter. No one seemed to be aware of my presence. The Giant threw himself upon a couch of turf, and listened with an indifferent air to the supplications of his companions.

"Be not thus contemptuous," I heard the Enchanter say,

on entering ; "you have the advantage at present, but fortune will one day change. The same arts, which have made you possessor of the two spinning-wheels, may again deprive you of them ; nor can you put them to any use without the third, which I never will trust out of my own custody. Listen then to my proposals. Restore my brothers to their original forms ; suffer me to re-assemble the limbs of the Queen of Denmark ; and forbear to insist upon the dreadful conditions attached to the possession of Sapinella. On my part, I assure you, though I cannot consent to becoming your subject, that I will never attempt to become your master ; the two spinning-wheels shall remain yours for ever, and I promise you from this moment eternal peace and amity."

"Promise me a fiddlestick ! " interrupted the Giant, taking the pipe out of his mouth ; "will yonder stubborn little Princess promise to marry me, if I put matters to rights again ? That is the only promise, which will have any effect, I can assure you."

"I marry you ? " exclaimed the damsel : "Inhuman monster, what claim can you advance to my affections ? Have you not cut my unfortunate mother into a thousand pieces ? Have not your spells compelled my royal father to walk upon all fours ? Besides, if you had not the worst memory of any Genius upon earth, you would recollect, that the stars have decreed, that I shall marry nobody, unless I marry Facardin, Prince of Ophir."

"A fig for the stars ! " cried the Giant ; "they don't know what they talk about ; for it was but last night that I read in them these identical words, written in a very neat running hand—'Sapinella of Jutland shall never marry Facardin, Prince of Ophir.' "

"I shall certainly go distracted ! " exclaimed Sapinella, wringing her hands. "I am to marry nobody, if not the

Prince of Ophir, and yet it seems the Prince of Ophir is never to marry me : the meaning of all which is, that I am never to marry at all ! Surely the devil is in the stars, and I wish they were all at the bottom of the sea, for they are the plague of my existence ! ”

Here she began to weep, as if she meant to set the room afloat. However, her tears could not melt the Giant’s hard heart, who rose to take his departure.

“ On no other conditions,” said he, “ will I reverse my spells ; and if you can reverse them yourself, you are cleverer than I take you to be. Farewell, Princess ; the Prince of Ophir will be here shortly. I cannot prevent your seeing him, but I will prevent your liking him while with you ; as to *his* liking *you*, that your own rashness has already prevented. Aye ! aye ! ” continued he, addressing himself to the cock, “ turn away, old gentleman ! If you had done that sooner, you would have done wisely. As it is, your labour is thrown away, and you are likely to crow for sixteen years longer.”

The cock only replied by a look of indignation, and by turning his tail upon him with an air, for a cock, remarkably majestic. In the mean while the form of the Giant, dissolving into a cloud of smoke, soon made its exit from the grotto.

In this conversation nothing struck me more than the name of the Prince of Ophir ; it was the same with my own, and I began to suspect that the family name of the royal family of Ophir must needs be Facardin. To ascertain this point, I now advanced from my concealment, and having made one of my best dancing bows, I addressed the Enchanter nearly as follows :—

“ Permit me, Doctor,” said I, (for, as he was a conjuror, I thought that he must certainly have taken an University degree,) “ permit me, Doctor, to make myself known to you, and ask you a few questions. Idle as you may think my

curiosity, I confess I cannot help wishing to know the name of my parents, and to what place I went to be born. Satisfy me on this head, and you shall be handsomely rewarded for your trouble."

With these words I showed him the palm of my hand, and prepared to cross his with a piece of money. The Enchanter, who was by no means a common fortune-teller, rejected both ; but, before he could reply, the cock hopped up to him with much dignity, and crowed thrice in tones so expressive, that I was convinced of their meaning more than cocks do in ordinary.

"Alas ! my dear Tarif-Eldin," said the magician, as if replying to some question which the cock had asked, "I fear that your hopes are too sanguine. In spite of his name, this young man seems calculated neither by his age nor his natural strength for so violent an exertion. However, as the bow is luckily in my possession, if you insist upon it, the trial shall be made ; but remember, that from the moment you enter your prison, its door must be closed no more to open, till the Facardin arrives destined to free you from your feathers, restore Sapi-nella's original form, dispel Moussellina's gravity, and devour that fatal toe, in which consists the whole power of our enemy."

Upon hearing this, the cock for a few moments appeared to hesitate, and he hung his head mournfully : but his spirits soon revived. He spread his tail, clapped his wings, and then turning to the Enchanter, exclaimed in a tone the most resolute, and with an air the most intrepid, "Cock-a-doodle-doo !" He then hopped into the bird-cage with great alacrity, the door of which closed upon him with a thundering noise.

The Enchanter now opening a case of sandal-wood, and drawing forth a bow of polished steel, requested me to bend it. I hesitated not to obey, but in vain did I first try it one way, and then another. My attitudes, it must be allowed, were

uncommonly graceful, but the bow remained unbent ; and at length the skin being rubbed off both my hands, (which naturally are rather of a delicate texture,) I was obliged to relinquish the instrument in despair.

"I thought so!" said the Enchanter, shaking his head mournfully ; "It is well, that I have three strings to *my* bow! As for this, be it your charge, Sapinella, and remember, that he who bends it, will thereby prove himself the person destined to reverse the ill fortunes of your family. I am now compelled to leave you ; henceforth, I am not permitted to visit you, neither is it in my power to prevent the Genius Feridoun from occasionally tormenting you with his presence : but let it be some consolation to know, that whenever he sets his foot upon this mountain, he becomes your slave, not your master, and that my spells will force him to forbear repeating his addresses, or attempting to possess your person by force. Take courage then, my dear niece ; however disagreeable the form which your rash vow compels you to assume, remember, that you will one day regain your own, will be married to the Prince of Ophir, have a great many children, and live very happy ever after."

"Alas!" replied the lady, "you forget, most wise Caramoussal, that the provoking stars have decreed, that I never am to marry the Prince of Ophir ! But what surprises me most is, that since you are a conjuror, and practise the black art, you did not foresee and prevent all this mischief."

"Sapinella!" replied Caramoussal, with a look of profound wisdom, "though I am an Enchanter, I would have you to know, that I never was taken for a Conjuror before ! neither can the power of magic possibly reverse the decrees of fate, for decrees are decrees, and fate is fate ! Be content to know, that no exertions on my part shall be wanting to alleviate your sorrows ; nor do I quite despair of finding at length a Prince

vigorous enough to bend this bow, a mouth as large as your father's, a cock that can fly as high as the emperor, and a rope spun by the hands of three Princesses the most beautiful in the world, long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea, and strong enough to bind our inveterate enemy in fetters never to be broken. As for you, young man," continued he, addressing himself to me, " I must not at present satisfy your curiosity respecting your parents ; suffice it to know, that you have a brother, who will shortly fall into the power of Feridoun, that Giant whom you have just now seen. Be it your care to deliver him from thence, and in order that you may know him when you meet, behold his figure ! "

Here the Enchanter waved his wand. I immediately beheld on the opposite side of the grotto a young man seated on a rose-coloured sofa, and picking his teeth in a careless attitude : the vision lasted but a moment ; yet in that short period he found time to yawn thrice, an habit of which (as you probably have already observed) love itself has not been able to cure him. The figure having disappeared, Caramoussal thus continued his discourse.

" Your brother is called Facardin as well as yourself ; a name, which important reasons have induced me to bestow on various children, in whose fate I feel interested. Feridoun's abode is not easily discovered ; but as it is necessary that you should reach it for the purpose of rescuing your brother, I now present you with this phoenix of all coursers, who not only surpasses the winds themselves in fleetness, but will, unbidden, conduct you to those places, where it is most your interest to be."

I heard the latter part of his speech with some surprise. In vain did I look round and round ; no courser was to be seen, and yet did Caramoussal continue to enhance the value of his

present ; assuring me, that the animal was sound wind and limb, perfectly free from vice, and altogether as clever a little tit, as ever was crossed by a gentleman. And still no horse appeared ! At length I began to suspect, that my friend the Enchanter was not quite himself, and that he had been endeavouring to settle matters with the Genius over a bottle. This suspicion was confirmed, when conducting me to a corner of the grotto, he pointed to a three-legged stool, and desired me to mount immediately. He then forcibly obliged me to seat myself upon the stool, and thus proceeded.

"Excellent !" said he, with an air of satisfaction ; "really, considering that you never were on horseback before, you make a tolerable appearance, and seem to have a very good seat. Now then, nothing is wanting to complete your travelling equipage, except this two-stringed guitar. Take it, and observe, that whenever you strike the silver chord, all who are within hearing will be compelled to dance ; and when you strike the golden one, whatever actions are going on at that moment will be continued by the performers during a full hour : on yourself alone the charm will have no effect. Now, then, proceed in search of your brother ; and should you meet by the way with any stray legs, arms, heads, or bodies, have the goodness to put them into the green velvet bag, which is suspended under your horse. Remember also, that whenever you wish him to set forwards, you must say—' Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan ;' and that you never must dismount him without first whistling thrice, and rubbing the tip of your nose as often against the bridge of your guitar."

"My dear Doctor," said I, "you must certainly be dreaming ! What in the name of heaven can you mean by stray legs and arms ? and as to making this three-legged stool move by merely pronouncing—"Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan,"—the thing is absolutely impossible."

The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when the stool set off with me, as hard as it could lay its three legs to the ground ! It galloped up hill and down dale like a mad thing, leaped over five-barred gates with the greatest agility, and upon reaching the banks of a river, without hesitation it dashed into the water, and soon landed me on the opposite shore. Immediately my wooden courser resumed his speed, and away we went again, as if we had been galloping for a wager. As we passed through a village, the people ran out to wonder at us; the men and women hooted us, and the little boys pelted us with mud, stones, rotten eggs, and dead cats ; but all this only served to make my nag go the faster. I cried out to them to stop him, for that I was run away with. Some of them endeavoured to obey me ; but whenever they approached the stool to lay hold of it, one of its legs kicked up, and dealt about broken heads and bloody noses with such generosity, that the attempt was soon abandoned. The machine continued to proceed, nor stopped, till we reached the gate of an ancient castle.

Notwithstanding the rapidity of my progress, I was not in the least fatigued ; it's true, my horse was nothing more than a joint-stool, but it was as easy as if it had been an arm-chair ! I was occupied in examining the castle's exterior, when the portal grated upon its rusty hinges, and two servants, almost bent double with age, advanced with an entreaty, that I would enter, and accept of some refreshment. With this request I readily complied ; but nothing could induce me to quit my seat, till I had whistled thrice, and given my nose three gentle rubs against the bridge of my guitar. After this important ceremony I entered the castle ; nor was I a little pleased, nor my companions a little surprised, at observing that the stool came trotting after me, and never suffered me to go out of its sight. This induced me to hope, that the machine

was growing attached to me ; and desirous of encouraging this predilection, I failed not occasionally to pat it upon the back, and seize every means of showing, that I was satisfied with its services.

My guides crawled on so slowly, that I had full leisure to observe the apartments through which we passed. They were magnificently furnished, but all in an antiquated taste ; old tapestry, old books, old pictures, old chairs ; everything was old, and seemed of a piece with my conductors. They ushered me into a small octagon chamber, and I now begged to know their master's name.

" We have no master," was the reply. " This castle belongs to a Princess, to whom you will be introduced as soon as you are old enough."

I thought this a very strange condition, and begged to know at what age her Highness would think me presentable. I was answered, that natives of that country did not presume to appear at court till they were turned of sixty ; but that, in consideration of my being a stranger, ten full years would be abated. I hastened to assure the domestics that, anxious as I was to be acquainted with their mistress, still I could not possibly wait thirty years for that honour ; that I was obliged to proceed on my journey immediately ; but that I should take care to return and pay my respects to her Highness as soon as I should be decently decrepit.

" You mistake me," interrupted one of the old men. " As a stranger, it will be sufficient for you to look old ; and, provided you do but wear the appearance of age, your possessing the vigour of youth is a defect which you will find the Princess very ready to forgive in you. You are to know that she once was a mistress of the Genius Feridoun ; but being grown old, and consequently neglected, she retired from the world in disgust, and now keeps her court in this ancient castle. In order

to preserve her eyes from being offended by the sight of that-youth and beauty in others which she no longer possesses herself, nothing but what is old is suffered to approach her, and her court is composed entirely of superannuated belles and beaux in their dotage. A talisman placed here by Feridoun preserves in our hearts our youthful passions : we love, intrigue, quarrel, and fight, as if we were still in the bloom of seventeen, and to a stranger this sight will probably appear entertaining. Here you will find four antiquated couple tottering through a cotillion in spectacles ; while there a circle of seniors, with trumpets at their ears, are fascinated by the vocal powers of a toothless toast. In one room you will admire two fiery dotards burning with rage, anxious to fight, but unable to draw their swords ; and in another you will see a wrinkled beauty of four-score snatch her shrivelled hand from her drivelling adorer, refuse him in disdain one of her five remaining hairs, and exclaim against the wiles of wicked man, and the too easy faith of unsuspecting woman."

This account piqued my curiosity, and having nothing better to do, I accepted the services of the old domestics, who hastened to equip me for their lady's presence-chamber. They began by fixing a grey wig upon my head, and then fastened under my chin a beard, whose length was truly respectable. After this, they drew red circles round my eyes, traced several wrinkles on my forehead, and in a quarter of an hour rendered my appearance so venerable, that when I first looked in the glass, I involuntarily made myself a low bow. The servants now withdrew to announce my arrival to their mistress.

Soarcely was I left alone, when the sound of complaint attracted my attention. I listened, and heard a voice which seemed to be in the room, bemoan its hard fate, call the stars cruel, and (as is usual on such occasions) invite death to put an end to its sorrows. As I could discover nobody except

myself in the chamber, and as the voice seemed to be close at my elbow, I was somewhat puzzled by this occurrence. Presently, I felt something treading upon my toes : I looked down : it was the joint-stool, which had taken that mode of attracting my attention, and which having obtained it, marched before me towards a corner-cupboard. It was fastened, and as I have always been told, that it is extremely wrong to pick a lock, I judged, that it would be much more genteel to break the door open. I did so, and found in it a tortoise-shell box, which I examined without delay. What was my surprise at finding a pair of lips of the most rosy freshness, whose continual motion (as well as that of the tongue, which I could perceive occasionally,) left me no doubt from whence the voice proceeded !

This circumstance embarrassed me not a little. In vain did I endeavour to unravel it, but could only ascertain, that from their incessant motion; the lips must certainly have belonged to a woman. Still the complaints continued ; I listened to them attentively, and at length heard some sentences which cleared up my doubts at once.

“ No ! ” said the voice, “ never was wretchedness equal to mine ! Never before was woman chopped in pieces, because her daughter refused to marry a man ten yards high ! Oh ! if I had my eyes again, I should certainly cry them out at thinking to how ignoble an office my bosom is fated, that bosom of which I was once so proud ! And shall that harridan of a Princess possess it for ever ? No ! let but the rest of me be put together again, and soon will I have my bosom back in spite of her teeth ; or rather in spite of *mine*, for alas ! the traitress has got possession of *them* too ! As for my other limbs, heaven only knows, what is become of them ; but I am terribly afraid, that my legs are fallen into bad hands. Ah ! if that defect in them, which I so carefully concealed from every eye, should be discovered. Insupportable

thought ! Heaven and earth ! I should certainly expire with shame, were it once publicly known, that my legs are bandy ! "

So pathetic was the tone, in which these last words were pronounced, that I could not refrain from weeping. I asked the lips several questions, but to no purpose ; indeed I found afterwards, that the ears, which ought to have heard me, were at that time about three thousand leagues off. However, I had no doubt, but that these very lips were part of the stray limbs recommended to my care by Caramoussal, and I immediately deposited them in the green velvet bag. This was scarcely done, when the servants returned to conduct me to the Princess ; I followed them, and my three-legged companion trotted after me.

The Princess Chinchinosa (for that was her name) it seems, had been a favourite of Feridoun ; I could not by any means admire Feridoun's taste. She might indeed have been handsome once, but I should never have suspected it. Her skin was like so much tanned leather : her high cheek-bones, daubed thickly over with paint, seemed ready to pierce through the skin which covered them : and not having hair enough left with which to fasten it on, her monstrous flaxen periwig got a little more on one side with every movement ; so that by the time that I had been in the room a quarter of an hour, it had made half the circuit of her head, and the hind part hung down before. She sat upon a lofty throne surrounded by her courtiers, whose nodding heads and trembling hands made me think at first that I had got among a parcel of shaking mandarins at a china shop. The ladies of the bed-chamber were all turned of fourscore ; every maid of honour was at least in her grand climacteric ; and there was not a staff officer in her whole army, who did not go upon crutches. Such was the court of the Princess Chinchinosa.

She received me very graciously, and at dinner I was placed at her right hand. I soon found that spoon meat was in great request ; not but that there was a variety of other dishes, such as old mutton, large beef, and full grown fowls. But as for lamb and veal they were forbidden food ; the Princess would have fainted at the sight of a chicken ; and a pigeon, to which I was helped, proved so extremely old and tough, that in my conscience I believe it was the same that carried Noah the olive-branch. During dinner, there was a concert, at which nothing but old music was performed ; and between the instrumental pieces, a Soprano (who looked like Methusalem) favoured us by warbling Solomon's song. His hands trembled so, that he could hardly hold the music-book, and his voice being extremely infirm, I could not but allow, that his shake was wonderful. However I did not much attend to the music ; another object engrossed all my attention.

Her Highness's nose and chin being of an immoderate length, and meeting so close that a walnut placed between them would have remained there firmly, she was obliged to introduce her food into her mouth at one corner. Luckily that mouth was so large, that she accomplished the point without difficulty, and in doing it took care to display two rows of teeth admirable for their regularity and whiteness. She saw that I remarked them, and, willing to complete her supposed conquest, she made the heat a pretext for removing the gauze from her neck, and discovering a bosom of which a Grace need not have been ashamed. I no sooner beheld it than I was convinced that both this and the teeth belonged to the lips already in my possession. Instantly I started from my seat, with one hand cut a flesh-coloured string which fastened the bosom to the back of her Highness's scraggy neck, and with the other clapped it into my bag, without saying a syllable.

Chinchinosa's surprise and rage at first choked her

utterance. No sooner did she recover herself than she seized a plate, intending to throw it at my head, and prepared to utter a volley of execrations, the first word of which I verily believe to have been nothing less than—" Damnation!" Before she could execute either the one or the other design, I struck the golden string of my guitar. Instantly her hand remained with the plate suspended in the air, her lips continued to move with incredible velocity, and she continued to repeat—" Damn, damn, damn, damn,"—without being able to bring out another syllable. Nor was the effect produced upon the spectators less strong. The high steward, who was drinking, was unable to take the cup from his lips, and swallowed such a quantity of liquor, that I expected to see him burst every moment. His wife, who was fanning herself violently, soon knocked off the mounting, and continued to shake the bare sticks. The chief cadi was repeating an interesting anecdote; but, instead of making any progress in it, he repeated the same sentence over and over and over again, while his hearers listened as attentively as if they had never heard it before. Two old generals, who were shaking hands, continued to wring each others' fingers till I thought that they would all have dropped off; and the Master of the Horse, being employed in treading affectionately on the toes of the maid of honour who sat next to him, remained so long in this attitude, that the poor creature (who happened to have corns) roared aloud with all her might and main. Above all, I was amused by an old lady of the bed-chamber, who having just filled her mouth with a piece of burning hot pudding, was unable to get rid of it, and persevered in tossing it from one side to the other with such horrible wry faces as would have provoked laughter in Mahomet himself. I now prepared for my departure; but first I made bold to strip Chinchinosa's mouth of its borrowed ornaments. These also I put carefully into my bag; then seating myself on the tripod,

I pronounced—"Chick-ali-allah-mamoud-bizzil-khan!"—on which it gave a great jump, darted with me out of the window, and I soon lost sight of the castle and its environs.

I was well satisfied with the issue of this adventure, and still better with my wooden horse, who for a flying leap was without his equal. We soon reached the gates of a noble city. Not choosing to make too conspicuous a figure, I quitted my seat after using the necessary precautions, and entered the city on foot; but my companion attracted such universal notice, and the crowd which followed us created such a disturbance, that as we passed the prime minister's palace he was induced to appear in his balcony. Struck with surprise at the sight of this animated machine, he gave orders that both of us should be conducted into his presence. This command I readily obeyed, and the stool trotted up stairs after me of its own accord.

My reception was very gracious. I took care to keep my birth and station in life a secret, which (as I knew nothing about them myself) was a matter of no great difficulty: however, I failed not occasionally to throw out certain little hints, which, by saying nothing and implying a great deal, made the minister understand that I was a person of no slight importance. On his part, he informed me that I was then in the capital of the Danish dominions; and he begged me very politely to make use of his house during my stay at Copenhagen, a request with which I was condescending enough to comply.

At night I was conducted to a superb apartment. I could not help expressing to the domestics who were appointed to attend me my surprise that, among all his civilities, their lord had not offered to present me at court. A flood of tears was the first answer to this observation; after which they informed me that the whole royal family had suddenly disappeared in a most unaccountable manner, and that the supreme power was for the present exercised by the chief minister alone. They

also entreated me not to mention this subject before their lord, whose grief had been excessive on this occasion ; and they even hinted that a tender attachment to her Majesty was suspected to have no small share in producing so violent an affliction.

The domestics now left me : I retired to my couch, where I soon fell into a profound sleep ; but the tripod did not suffer me to enjoy it long. As its movements seemed to insist upon my rising, I took my guitar, and followed the most intelligent of all moveables through a long gallery, which led to the minister's own bed-chamber. Unwilling to disturb him at an hour so unseasonable, I would not enter ; but I made no scruple of looking through the key-hole, which (I thought) could do no harm to anybody. My surprise at what I beheld was excessive ! The minister, a grave, stately man, with a white beard, was on his knees, while he addressed the most passionate and pathetic speeches to a pair of the bandiest legs that ever were covered by a petticoat ! It is true, to set them off a little, they were clothed in flame-coloured stockings, with silver clocks ; and I remarked that, in spite of their crookedness, they walked up and down the room with an air of extraordinary dignity !

" Oh ho ! " said I to myself ; " these legs must certainly belong to the lips and bosom in my green velvet bag : they must needs become their companions."

But how was this to be managed ? the door was locked, and the key on the inside. However, accidentally applying my shoulder to one part, and my knee to another, at the same time through mere inattention giving a tolerably hard push against it, as good luck would have it, the door happened to fly open ! at that moment the right leg was replying to a tender speech of the minister's by a tolerably hard kick upon the left cheek. I walked straight up to them, took one in each hand, and in spite of all their struggling, deposited them very quietly in my green velvet bag.

Most extravagant was the rage of the prime minister! he called loudly for his servants to throw me out of the window; a ceremony, which in my opinion was quite unnecessary. Desirous, therefore, to save the poor fellows the trouble of coming up stairs, I now tried for the first time the silver chord of my guitar. No sooner had I struck it, than the minister seemed to have been stung by a Tarantula. In vain did he strive to repress his desire to dance, a desire so unbecoming his age and station! First he extended *one* arm, then the other; now he lifted the left leg, and now the right; till at length he set off at full speed, and danced the Hays round two elbow chairs with wonderful activity. I could not restrain my mirth, when I saw the old gentleman (his cheeks glowing with rage and his eyes flashing fire) brisk away, snap his fingers, nod his head, figure in and out between the chairs, and every now and then set to a corner cupboard. But my attention was soon called to quiet a disturbance, which had taken place in the green velvet bag. It seems the rage for dancing had communicated itself to the flame-coloured legs; they were footing it away at an astonishing rate; while the lips complained aloud, that they were kicked black and blue, and the bosom sent forth such sighs, as if its very heart was breaking. This being the case, I thought fit to put an end to the ball. I forbore to strike my guitar, seated myself on the joint-stool, and it sprang with me through the window, just as the minister came tumbling upon the floor, quite out of breath, and totally exhausted.

I will pass over the three next years of my life, whose events were wholly unimportant, and hasten to the period when I encountered my brother for the first time. One day, the friendly Enchanter suddenly appeared before me, as I was reposing myself upon the shore of the Red Sea.

"Youth," said he, "I am well satisfied with your obedience:

you have secured those limbs, about which I was most anxious, and now I have only to find the nose and the left hip. But the time is arrived, when your brother requires your assistance : hasten then to Feridoun's island, and release him from his disgraceful captivity ; but in order to accomplish that desirable event, you must first assume this necessary disguise."

With these words he presented me with a female dress and assisted me in the arrangement of it. He proved to be a very dexterous attendant, and contrived to set off my person to such advantage, that when I peeped into my only looking-glass (the Red Sea, whose billows washed my feet,) a very smart young woman presented herself in the watery mirror. One circumstance, indeed, by no means contributed to give me a feminine appearance. I had not shaved for two days, and my beard being naturally rather black and bushy, it formed a very striking contrast with the snow-white muslin, in which my head was enveloped. No sooner did I mention this, than Caramoussal (who really is a sharp active fellow, and can turn his hand to any thing) drew out a shaving case, caught me by the nose, and whipped off my beard in the twinkling of an eye. This done, he took the green velvet bag in his hand, bade me adieu, and vanished.

I was now left to my own thoughts ; I did not indulge them long, for I was of opinion, that in order to support a female character naturally, the less that I thought the better. Not doubting that my joint-stool was acquainted with the nearest road to Feridoun's habitation, I seated myself upon it as usual, and began to pronounce the charm, when to my utter astonishment the stool slipped from under me, and I fell upon my nose with a terrible flump. I was not a little displeased at this practical jest ; but resolving not to give up the point, I endeavoured to reseat myself : the tripod proved too cunning or me : aware of my design, it would not suffer me to

approach within arm's length of it, nor was it till after an hour's chace, that I succeeded in catching it. Scarcely did I grasp its fore-leg, when suddenly I felt myself seized and lifted into the air. Greatly was I alarmed at discovering, that a monstrous bird called a Roc, had pounced me, and was bearing me through the atmosphere in his talons. You may be sure that I did not spare my lungs on this occasion, and a pair of tolerable ears might have heard my cries from the Red Sea to Jerusalem.

A few moments only had elapsed, when I saw something glitter beneath me. The bird descended straight towards it, and I soon found myself on an island apparently composed of crystal; upon which the beams of the sun were playing and tinging it with a variety of colours, the most beautiful and brilliant. Instantly the bird was metamorphosed into a female, the deformity of whose person and countenance was by no means compensated by the magnificence of her dress.

"Be not alarmed, lovely lady," said she in a gentle voice: "If you prove the woman for whom I take you, you have it in your power to render a signal service to the Genius Feridoun, and in return may reckon upon his most fervent gratitude, but should I find myself mistaken in the person, I will immediately either convey you back to the spot where I found you, or transport you to any part of the globe which you may think proper to point out. Now follow me to my sovereign."

She then conducted me down a magnificent staircase of crystal, till we reached a spacious saloon. Here, on a throne of coral, sat the Giant, whom I had already seen upon Mount Atlas. He seemed greatly puzzled about something, and was entertaining himself with an immense magic lantern. My conductress interrupted him.

"Illustrious lord!" said she, "look upon this damsel; in my opinion her beauty far excels that of the Princess Nour."

The Genius forbore to answer, till he had put on his spectacles. They were formed of two enormous telescopes, and with these he examined me for some minutes with great attention. In the meanwhile I affected to blush, and fix my eyes through modesty on the ground.

"In point of beauty," he replied, "you are certainly right; but charms alone will not answer my purpose: I must first know whether she is of royal blood—come hither, pretty one: pray, where were you born?"

After a pause, during which I seemed to struggle with excess of timidity, I made a low reverence, and replied in a feigned voice—"wherever your Excellency pleases."

"You are extremely obliging," answered he; "but as that does not quite resolve my question, I should be glad to know who were your parents?"

"To the best of my knowledge," said I, after a few moments past in reflection; "to the best of my knowledge they were my father and mother."

"So I should suppose!" cried the giant impatiently. "Why the girl is an idiot! what I want to know is, what were their names and stations in life?"

"My lord," answered I, "they never thought proper to tell me of their own accord, and Mahomet forbid that I should have been so indiscreet, as to ask them any such impertinent questions."

"Why, I protest," exclaimed Feridoun, "you are a very paragon of prudence! But as I am not likely to gain much information from you, we may as well break off our discourse. Cadiga, conduct her to the Princess Nour, while I endeavour to discover by my books, that of which she seems herself to be so ignorant. Go, my pretty simplicity; Cadiga will furnish you with playthings, and you may have as many almonds and raisins as you can manage to eat."

I thanked him with an awkward childish air, and then followed Cadiga, mincing my steps as much as possible, and mostly walking upon tip-toe. I was now ushered into an apartment, formed also of crystal. But curtains of gold stuff were suspended round the walls, and effectually prevented the persons within from being seen by those without. At the further end of the room was a sofa, on which sat a young lady of exquisite beauty. She was splendidly dressed, and was singing a plaintive air to her lute. Cadiga now bade me adieu, and retired, locking the door after her.

The joint-stool all this while had remained in my hand without motion. Its weight, added to that of the guitar, was by no means inconsiderable ; I was not sorry therefore to set it on the ground. No sooner was it at liberty, than it ran towards the lady, tumbled itself at her feet, and, as far as I could guess from its movements, seemed to express great joy at the sight of her. Without paying it any attention, the stranger rose, and came towards me with open arms.

"Welcome," she began, "welcome, lovely Princess, to this odious prison ! I am well aware that in you I behold one of these unhappy beauties, who are destined to share with me the task of spinning the cord, on which depends the preservation of our tyrant's power ; but I am still ignorant, whether you are the adorable Sapinella of Jutland, or the divine Moussellina of Astracan. Answer me, amiable stranger ; whom do I embrace at this moment ? "

Thus saying, she extended her arms towards me, and I was not behind hand in opening mine : unluckily, the joint-stool, who had no arms to spread, was provoked at seeing ours in that attitude ; and just as we were on the point of embracing, it very impolitely pushed itself between us so suddenly, that I was very near tumbling over it head foremost. I made two or three more attempts with no better success ; till finding, that

whenever I approached the lady, the inconvenient tripod never failed to tread upon my toes, break my shins, or kick my ankles, I gave up the point, and resolved to make a virtue of necessity. Accordingly, I declared my sex, and requested to know whether she could give me any intelligence of my brother. On finding that she had offered to embrace a man, the fair stranger endeavoured to blush: she did not succeed, but I gave her great credit for the attempt. She then launched out in praise of the propriety of my conduct; protested that she should have been shocked to death, had she kissed a male creature; and thanked me in very strong terms for having made my confession, though I saw, that in her heart she would have been quite as well pleased if I had kept it to myself. She then desired me to be seated; I obeyed, and placed myself by her on the sofa; but the jealous joint-stool took care to squeeze himself in between us.

"If by your brother," began the Princess, "you mean the warrior who calls himself Facardin, I can only inform you, that he is now upon this island, and is a great favourite of Feridoun's, and a still greater of his wife's. Not that I have seen him myself, being never suffered to quit this apartment; nor is he likely to visit me, as Cadiga informs me, that he professes an invincible antipathy to women. I know no more about your brother, whose rescue, I hope, you will speedily accomplish. My own deliverance, I fear, is far off: I am guarded by a thousand indissoluble spells, and, alas! the chains which I wear, were forged by my own imprudence."

HISTORY OF NOUR, PRINCESS OF SERENDIP.

My father, who was sovereign of Serendip, died when I was scarcely fourteen, and left me his sole heiress. I was sought in marriage by a multitude of admirers, but none made himself

so agreeable to me as Zemin, Prince of Fez. Not that there was anything particularly captivating either in his figure or his face ; neither was his wit very brilliant, or his understanding uncommonly profound ; but then he was extremely good-humoured, and composed the very best riddles that I ever read in my life. Besides, he was so merry and comical, that he kept me in a fit of laughter from morning till night ; and when I add, that he danced perfectly well, and had very white teeth, you will easily conceive that I loved him to distraction.

On the day preceding that fixed for our marriage, as we sat in a bower of my gardens, Zemin happened to praise the workmanship of a certain chest, which stood in his chamber. His account of it excited my curiosity, and it was sent for. It proved to be made of sandal-wood, but its greatest ornament consisted in a number of golden figures inlaid upon the lid, on which they moved about as if they were alive, performed dances, fought battles, and were perfectly obedient to the commands of Zemin. At length I inquired what the box contained. With surprise I learned that my lover was ignorant himself. A dervise, who was then dead, had made him a present of it ; at the same time assuring him that if he dared to open it without the Genius Feridoun's permission, he would expose himself to the most dreadful misfortunes.

No sooner did I hear this than I resolved to try my influence over Zemin, by compelling him to open the chest. In vain did he remonstrate, and as he still persisted in refusing compliance, I threw myself into an agony of passion, and at length pretended to faint. Zemin could not stand this trial of his affection. He seized the chest, touched a secret spring known only to himself, and the lid instantly flying off, he drew forth the contents, and laid them at my feet. Of course I immediately recovered from my swoon, in order to examine his present. It consisted of a steel bow, and an arrow with a

golden head. But no sooner were they out of Zemin's hand, than an enormous bird (shaped and coloured like a cock, but neither whose size nor flight resembled that animal's) darted from above, seized the bow and arrow, and was out of sight with them in an instant.

This incident was strange, but the next was terrible. Suddenly the ground opened at a few paces distant from us, and a black shaggy gigantic arm coming out of it, grasped my two hands, and dragged me into the cavity. Zemin, who was staring after the feathered robber with his mouth wide open, was alarmed by my cries. He flew to assist me, and was just in time to catch me by the feet. By these he attempted to draw me back again ; and the shaggy arm persisting in pulling me down, while my lover persisted in pulling me up, I was see-sawed in this manner for a full half hour, than which nothing could be more disagreeable. At length a violent exertion of the shaggy arm compelled Zemin to let go his hold. Down I went headforemost ; the earth closed over me, and for this time I fainted in good earnest.

On recovering, I found myself in this apartment, and attended by Cadiga, who informed me that I was in the power of the Genius Feridoun. I inquired for what crime I was thus imprisoned. She replied, that her master was highly offended with me for having been the means of throwing the enchanted bow and arrow into the power of his enemy Caramoussal : but this was not his only motive in carrying me off. It seems that there exist three-spinning wheels, which being put into the hands of the three most beautiful Princesses in the universe, will fabricate a cord, long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea, and strong enough to fetter the three sons of the Enchantress, Mergian-Banou, whose magic powers are alone equal to contend against Feridoun's. By various stratagems he has obtained possession of

two of these spinning-wheels ; and as he daily hopes to make himself master of the third, he naturally is anxious to discover the three Princesses destined to make use of these cabalistical machines. For this purpose, he procured the baptismal registers of all the Princesses at present in existence. He then, by means of an enchanted lantern, caused them all to pass in review before him, and adjudged the palm of beauty to Moussellina of Astracan, Sapinella of Jutland, and your humble servant. To assure himself that his selection was correct, he next summoned the three most beautiful Princesses in the world to appear. First came Moussellina ; good !—Then appeared Sapinella ; better !—But now, when it was my turn to advance, lo ! and behold ! in walked a lady veiled from head to foot, and whose stature sufficiently declared that she was not the Princess of Serendip. This has puzzled the Genius not a little. Though frequently repeated, the trial has never met with better success. Every time that he summonses the Princesses by their names, he is more and more convinced that I am one of the charming trio : but no sooner does he call for the three most beautiful Princesses, than in steps this veiled lady, and puts all his ideas in confusion. Cadiga, under the form of a Roc, is frequently despatched abroad, in hopes of making some discovery ; nor do I doubt, noble stranger," continued the Princess Nour, addressing herself to me, "that, deceived by your dress, she fancied that you might possibly be that mysterious fair one, and under that persuasion conveyed you to Feridoun's island. Should this be the case, I can only advise you to——"

"I can't hear one word they say !" cried some one above us in an angry tone.

We both started from the sofa, and looked upwards : to my utter astonishment I beheld my former mistress, Crystallina, perched upon the transparent roof, which (not being so thick

as the walls) happened at this moment to give way with a loud crash, and the paragon of curiosity came tumbling into the middle of the room. We ran to her assistance, and found, that in spite of so dangerous an accident, she would escape with a black eye and two or three contusions. She now thought proper to apologise for so abrupt an entrance. She stated, that learning from her attendants, that two unknown persons were concealed in this apartment, she could not but feel anxious to take a peep at them; that as the door was locked, she made bold to procure a ladder and look in at the roof; and she finished by entreating to know who we were, as she was extremely curious to learn our histories.

Nour (who had good reasons for pardoning the faults of curiosity) readily promised to content Crystallina: but I had other business in hand. The stool having given me several hints, that it was time to resume our journey, I pronounced the usual charm, on which it sprang with me through the fractured ceiling, and soon landed me in the saloon, where I had been presented to the Genius. He was absent himself, but in his stead I beheld a person much more welcome to me: it was my brother, who holding the magic lantern, gazed with great earnestness on the opposite wall, where appeared the figure of a beautiful female: her countenance was extremely grave, and above her head was inscribed in characters of fire—“Moussellina the Serious, Princess of Astracan.”

I hastened to embrace him, and expected him to be greatly surprised at hearing me salute him as my brother: but it seems, that Caramoussal had already informed him in a dream both of my relationship and my disguise. He received me, therefore, with much cordiality, but little astonishment. I explained to him the virtues of my tripod, and proposed, that we should make use of them to quit Feridoun's dominions. He embraced my offer without hesitation.

" You cannot do me a greater favour," said he, " for of all the islands in the universe, this island is the dullest, and its mistress is the most tiresome person under the sun, except its master. Besides, happening to enter this apartment, I found this magic lantern, and the lamp being lighted, to keep myself from going to sleep, I began to play with it. You see the figure which presented itself ; nothing can be more lovely, and I was just thinking how much I should be delighted to throw myself at the feet of the original, if travelling all the way to Astracan were not so extremely troublesome. However, your equipage obviates this difficulty, and (if your praise of its expedition be not exaggerated) I shall soon find myself in the presence of the incomparable Moussellina."

I challenged him to an immediate trial of the merits of my stool : it was large enough to carry double with ease ; we seated ourselves, and it set off at full speed. We soon reached the sea, into which the intrepid machine plunged without hesitation, and landed us safe on the opposite shore. Here Caramoussal was waiting for us ; he gave me great credit for the manner in which I had executed my commission ; at the same time informing me, that as no one could enter Feridoun's island without its master's permission, he had been obliged to disguise me, in order that the Genius might introduce me there himself. Then restoring my male apparel, and ordering us to hasten to Astracan, he embraced us affectionately, and then disappeared.

We obeyed him, and travelled forward with great celerity ; though my brother frequently complained of not being able to lean back. However, in spite of this inconvenience, the drowsiness of his nature so far got the better of him, that when we were about two days' journey from Astracan, he fell asleep in broad day-light, and losing his seat, in the middle of a sound nap, came tumbling upon the ground. The machine stopped

of its own accord ; but in my anxiety for his safety, I forgot everything else, and sprang off the stool without taking the necessary precautions. No whistling was thought of ! No guitar-bridge was remembered ! Fraternal affection took entire possession of my mind ! My brother was luckily unhurt ; he yawned, rubbed his eyes, and rose ; but even his apathy was not quite proof against astonishment, when he saw the joint-stool raise itself upon its hind legs, split its third leg into two arms, (between which sprouted out an head and shoulders,) and at length present to us the form of a youth, of diminutive but elegant form, and of a countenance, though not handsome, remarkably engaging.

"I am sorry for it," exclaimed Dinarzade, "with all my heart and soul. Let me die, if this be not another prince, with another history, which will prove as long and as tedious as those of the princes, his predecessors."

"Fair Dinarzade," replied Facardin of Trebisond, "as frequently is the case with you, you are perfectly mistaken. This stranger was no other than Zemin, whose adventures you have already heard related by the Princess Nour. The Genius having, in his wrath, changed him into a three-legged stool, Caramoussal took pity on him ; and as one spell can only be reversed by another, he promised that Zemin should regain his original shape, whenever the person who sat upon him should rise without first complying with certain conditions. On giving him to me, and endowing him with peculiar powers of velocity and discretion, the Enchanter was compelled to make those conditions known to me. I had neglected to fulfil them, and in consequence Zemin had regained his proper form."

"He thanked us in very strong terms for the service which we had rendered him, though we could not help wishing that it had been delayed eight and forty hours longer. His magic speed would have conveyed us in two days to Astracan, which,

in the common mode of travelling, we had no hopes of reaching under a month. However, we concealed our chagrin from Zemin, and accepted the offer of his company to Astracan. On our arrival we found that the Princess was absent on her usual tour, but were advised to meet her on the banks of this river, where she would not fail to appear at a stated period, and where the grand laughing trial was to take place. Hither then we hastened, each having adopted that dress which seemed most likely to excite ludicrous ideas. Zemin, in remembrance of that bird which robbed him of the fatal bow and arrow, has chosen the resemblance of a cock. For my part, a whimsical fellow whom I encountered the other day, and who made himself extremely ridiculous by his admiration of a lady's slipper, which he wore in his helmet, suggested to me the dress which you saw me wear this morning.

"I now come to the most unfortunate adventure of my life; or shall I rather say the most fortunate! But a few days are past since I recognised at a distance the royal music of Astracan. Not doubting but that the Princess was at hand, we hastened towards it. Suddenly we heard loud shrieks proceeding from the banks of a river, and on looking round we descried two strangers mounted on camels; one of whom being unable to restrain the animal on which he rode, was carried by him into the water. We quickened our pace in hopes of assisting him; but being at some distance, when we reached the spot neither men nor camels were discernible. Nothing was to be seen except some loose papers floating upon the water.

"Suddenly I perceived something glittering at my feet. It proved to be a gold box studded with sapphires, and which probably had been dropped by one of the two strangers. I opened it. That moment decided my fate! I beheld the portrait of a female so exquisitely beautiful, that from the first

moment I felt my happiness to depend on my possessing the original, and every succeeding minute has confirmed that conviction. Judge, then, what must be my grief, when my brother assured me that, by means of Feridoun's magic lantern, having seen all the princesses in existence, he beheld no face in the least resembling this portrait ; yet that it must represent a princess is sufficiently proved by the diadem upon her brow. Alas ! she was doubtless some ante-diluvian toast ! Some fair one, who was in vogue about the time of the building of Babel ! otherwise her beauty must already have rendered her celebrated, and the sighs of innumerable adorers have thundered her name through the universe. Judge, noble stranger, whether I have praised her too highly."

"Here," continued the Prince of Trebizonde, "he put the gold box into my hand. What was my surprise, my joy, my ecstasy, when I recognised a portrait which I had lost, and which was the exact resemblance of——"

"Of whom ?" interrupted Dinarzade eagerly.

"Of a person," continued Facardin, "whose name must never pass my lips. No, Caramoussal ; I will preserve my oath to you inviolate, however hard may be the task, however strong may be the temptation."

Here the Prince paused for a few minutes ; he sighed deeply ; his eyes were suffused with tears. However, he soon recovered himself, and resumed his narration in these words :

"The joy with which I surveyed the portrait, did not escape its admirer. He eagerly inquired, whether I recognised the features ? I replied in the affirmative ; adding, that it represented a Princess, who had been buried at least ten years. The gaiety with which I gave this intelligence, greatly offended the enamoured knight. I endeavoured to appease him.

"Who the lady was," said I, "I am not at liberty to reveal ; but though she is dead and buried, I can assure you, that your

passion is likely to meet with a return. One part of Car-moussal's prediction is accomplished ; this portrait, at the sight of which your heart for the first time throbbed with real love, will doubtless prove cold and insensible ; and though it is in your possession, I presume you have no thoughts of making that piece of ivory your wife. One part of the oracle is still unfulfilled—‘The first object which he loves,’ said the Enchanter, ‘he shall love for ever.’—Prove this to be true, and all may yet be well. But above all, take no offence at anything, that I may do or say. Be assured, that my favour is at present of no slight consequence to you, and that my good word will have great influence upon the success of your amours.”

Facardin of the Grotto entreated me to be more explicit ; but finding me resolute in silence, he woke his brother, (who during this conversation had fallen asleep,) took a cordial leave of me, and then my two namesakes retired to their own apartments.

Next morning I was roused by a message from Moussellina, who was impatient to see me, and my spinning-wheel. I dressed myself in haste, and (wheel in hand) soon entered the royal tent. The whole court was assembled there, and even Crystallina ; for in spite of the affronts which she had received on the preceding evening, curiosity to hear the story of Fortimbrass would not permit her to be absent. On my entrance a chair of state was presented to me.

“Spin !” said the Princess, as soon as I was seated :—
“Spin !”

I obeyed ; she followed my example. No sooner did we turn the handles of our wheels, than the third appeared at the top of the tent, accompanied by the two beautiful arms which had made use of it on the former evening. The Princess rose, and made a low reverence, as if to thank them for taking so

much trouble upon her account. On the contrary, Fortimbrass, who sat near his niece, immediately burst into a flood of tears.

" You do well, my dear niece," said he, " in showing attention to so near a relation. Alas ! those lovely hands are the cause of all my woes, and yet with what tender delight does the sight of them inspire me ! But I fear that I am not quite intelligible. Listen then, charming Moussellina, and compassionate my sufferings."

An universal silence instantly prevailed through the tent, and Fortimbrass commenced his narrative as follows :—

HISTORY OF FORTIMBRASS, KING OF DENMARK.

THOUGH my birth on the mother's side is illustrious, I must own with blushes that my father was a plebeian. Bedreddha, was the son of a respectable pastry cook in Samarcand, and, from his earliest years evinced a natural turn for his father's profession. In particular, his pigeon pies were imitable ; but unluckily happening to season one with ratsbane instead of pepper, which occasioned the death of the favourite Sultana, the Mufti, and a sky-blue lap dog, of which the king was particularly fond, he was obliged to make a precipitate retreat from Samarcand. It was rumoured, indeed, that he might have been forgiven for the deaths of the Queen and the Mufti, for his Samarcandish majesty very sagaciously observed,— " Women and parsons are to be found in plenty everywhere; but where can I find another sky-blue lap dog ? " In short, the dog proved my father's ruin, who for several years wandered about the world in the most abject poverty.

Chance at length conducted him to the island on which the enchantress Mergian-Banou had fixed her residence. His per-

soon pleased her eye, and his pigeon pies her palate. To fix so admirable a cook for ever in her service, she resolved to marry him ; but, previous to the nuptials, she took the precaution of rooting every twig of hemlock and nightshade out of the island. This proceeding was by no means unnecessary, for often did my father feel a strong inclination to treat her with a taste of such a pigeon pie as he had served up to the sky-blue lap dog. This being out of the case, he endeavoured to bear Mergian-Banou's ill temper (which, in truth, was diabolical) with patience ; and, upon the whole, they lived together very tolerably for man and wife, though extremely ill for man and woman. Three children were the fruits of their union, one of which I had the honour to be.

At the age of sixty, death paid a visit to Bedreddin ; for though my mother could prolong her own days, her power did not extend to prolonging those of other people. No sooner was her husband dead, than she felt the loss of him most severely. Deprived of the exercise of kicking and cuffing him, she could find no use upon earth for her arms and legs. Her appetite left her entirely, for no dish was now so well seasoned as Bedreddin's pigeon pies. So exquisite had been her pleasure in scolding him, that scolding other people appeared quite insipid to her ; her tongue remained motionless ; she left off talking entirely. When matters were come to such a pitch as this, I knew that the business must be nearly over with her. In short, she resolved to follow her husband to the grave, in hopes of eating pigeon-pies with him in Paradise. In consequence, she neglected the usual means of prolonging her existence. In vain did my brothers and myself implore her to change this fatal resolution ; she paid no more regard to our remonstrances than if they had been her husband's.

"It's extremely hard," said she, angrily, "that I may not go much as die to please myself ; but certainly it must be

the will of the stars that I should be thwarted in everything. However, your disobedience shall not prevent my performing the part of a good mother. I have it in my power to make, two of my sons sovereigns, while the third will become possessed of my magic art, a lot by no means the least valuable. Come, then, my children ; let each of you draw a paper from this bag of green velvet, and you will know the portions allotted to you by fate."

We obeyed. Each drew forth a sealed paper, and examined its contents with eagerness. The kingdom of Denmark fell to my own share, that of China to Tarif-Eldin's, while to Caramoussal (the eldest of us) was allotted our mother's magic art.

"Nor shall my kindness stop here," resumed Mergian-Banou. "Behold these three ebony spinning-wheels ; in them are contained those potent spells which hold in submission the spirits of earth and air, of fire and water ! No one can deprive you of them by force, nor even by artifice, except a woman. Be careful, therefore, never to trust them out of your own keeping, till you can place them in the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the universe. These lovely persons must then spin a cord long enough to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea ; the possession of which, my sons, you must afterwards decide by lot. He to whose share it falls will become sovereign, not only over his brothers, but over all the genii and sorcerers who exist ; and in particular, will be enabled to bind with that rope in everlasting fetters the giant Feridoun, the mortal enemy of my race. But, above all, you must take care to make no mistake respecting the beauty of the royal damsels to whom you intrust the wheels, for unless they are the *most* beautiful, the charm will have no effect."

"Mother," replied Caramoussal, after a short conference in private with Tarif-Eldin and myself, "we thank you sincerely for your generous intentions ; but forgive us if we do not profit

by your last bequest. Too fondly linked together by fraternal affection for either of us to wish for dominion over the others, we never can consent to the spinning of the mysterious cord."

Though sensible that her last moments were at hand, Mergian-Banou could not restrain her vexation at this speech.

"Mahomet grant me patience," cried the enchantress, jumping bolt upright in her bed; "was ever mother cursed with three such obstinate blockheads by way of sons! I can tell you, young gentlemen, if my advice is not followed you will repent it sorely; for though while the wheels are in your possession they will guard you against every misfortune, should any one of them ever fall into the hands of——"

Here death broke the thread of her discourse, and our mother lay before us a breathless corse. Fatal accident! had we but heard the conclusion of that sentence, what dreadful calamities should we have escaped! But alas! repining is now of no more use than these reflections!—I proceed with my history.

The first burst of grief being over, Tarif-Eldin and myself urged Caramoussal to accept the mysterious cord. He positively refused; and, as neither of us would even endure the thoughts of becoming the sovereign of our elder brother, it was unanimously resolved that the cord should not be fabricated at all. We now separated; but not till Caramoussal had given to each of his brothers a small silver hand-bell, the sound of which would summon him to our assistance from the utmost extremity of the globe. To this gift was added a couple of flying tigers; for, as neither Tarif-Eldin nor myself possessed the least necromantic knowledge, without this assistance we should probably have found some little difficulty in travelling into China and Denmark from an island in the Caspian Sea in three quarters of an hour.

"Pardon my interrupting you," said Crystallina at this part

of the King of Denmark's story, "but I have heard Feridoun frequently mention the Danish monarch, the Chinese emperor, and Caramoussal, as the three *Gensis* of whom alone he was in-fear. How comes it, then, that being a *Gensis*, you possess no supernatural powers ? "

"Because, my fair lady," answered Fortimbrass, "our mother being a sorceress in her own right, her sons were all called *Genii* by courtesy, though in fact none but the eldest had any legal claim to that title ; and as to his fears of us, they proceeded from our being in possession of the ebony spinning-wheels, which (as an oracle had forewarned him) were capable of fabricating a talisman superior to all those of which he was master himself."

My first appearance upon a flying tiger had something in it so novel and striking, that my new subjects were instantly pre-pesessed in my favour, and I was placed upon the throne with universal approbation. Soon after, I espoused Farruknaz, the reigning queen of Bactria, a woman of singular beauty, whose younger sister was already married to the King of Astracan.

In little more than four months after our marriage, the queen presented me with a daughter. Being somewhat surprised at this circumstance, I consulted several famous physicians, whether they had ever heard of such a case before ? They answered, that such an accident was common enough on the *first* time of a wife's lying-in, but desired me to make myself quite easy, for it was never known to happen a second time. This assurance satisfied me completely ; and as my daughter had made her appearance in the very spring of my marriage, I determined to call her Sapinella, which (as I need not inform you) in the Danish tongue means Primrose. Her charms have rendered this name famous ; but of all the Princesses who at the age of fifteen sought the hand of the lovely Sapinella, of Jutland, heiress of Denmark and of Bactria, no proposals

were so acceptable to me or to herself, as those of the Prince of Ophir. Possibly, fair Moussellina, you are not sufficiently skilled in geography to know the exact situation of that kingdom : permit me, therefore, to explain it to you. At that extremity of the Red Sea which is nearest to the Indies, are situated on one side the confines of Ophir, and on the other extend those of Bactria. The sovereigns of Bactria for time immemorial have been at enmity with those of Ophir : the reason was a very silly one, a case by no means unexampled among neighbours, who like these were only separated by five or six hundred leagues of water. These two potent sovereigns having plagued themselves with wars during upwards of fifteen hundred years, it was at length agreed between the King of Ophir and myself, that a final period should be put to them, and a lasting peace cemented by the union of our children.

My daughter was loveliness itself ; and the Prince of Ophir was a prodigy of personal charms and mental talents, though hitherto he had been as cold as ice to the fair sex. However, plenipotentiaries having met on both sides, the treaty was soon concluded. Now it happened that the Bactrian minister, though a great politician, had scarcely an inch of nose ; but to make up for it, he had the most enormous mouth that ever was beheld with eyes. The ambassador of Ophir, on the contrary —no ! stay a moment, till I recollect myself!—yes—exactly so. It was the ambassador of Ophir, whose mouth was so small, that a child of a year old would have got the tip of its finger into it with difficulty ; but then he made amends for it by a nose the most gigantic, and the thickest, studded with warts and pimples, that ever adorned the face of a plenipotentiary.

My ambassador carried the articles of peace and Sapinella's portrait to the court of Ophir ; but he might have saved himself the trouble ; the Prince would not even look at the picture,

and having watched for an opportunity of escaping, fled secretly from court one night, at about three quarters after twelve. But what happened in the interim at the other court, will make your hair stand on end with horror. Before I relate this catastrophe, it is necessary to inform you, that at the distance of about two stadii and a half from Fourchimena (the Bactrian capital) there was a small wood, extremely dark ; that within this wood there was a temple still more gloomy, (listen to this with attention, I beseech you;) that on the summit of this temple there was a pinnacle, which towered among the clouds ; that on the top of this pinnacle there was a cage ; and that in this cage there was a certain cock, whose predictions were esteemed as oracles throughout Bactria. Remember these circumstances, if you please, for they are of material consequence,

I was at this period resident myself at Fourchimena. The ambassador of Ophir was not yet arrived, and the whole court was expecting him with the greatest impatience, on account of the splendid fireworks prepared against the wedding-night. In the meanwhile the lovely Sapinella, who (as a princess ought to be who had received so excellent an education) was extremely partial to handsome, well-made young men, entreated her mother to accompany her privately to the oracle of the cock, in order to ascertain exactly at what hour the Prince of Ophir would arrive ; for, trusting to the information of the newspapers, she made no doubt that in order to render the scene more interesting, her lover himself would arrive most gallantly, under the name of the King his father's ambassador. My daughter, therefore, growing weary of being dressed out, frizzed, and perfumed at all hours (as, through fear of being taken by surprise, had been the case during three days and three nights together), was just on the point of slipping out through the stable-door in the twilight, unaccompanied by maids of honour or ladies of the bedchamber, when

the Queen was informed that the minister of Ophir was just arrived in a post-chaise.

This proof of amorous impatience confirmed them in the idea, that this could be no other than the handsome Prince in person. The chariot which was to have carried them to the oracle, brought them back to the palace. Sapinella (who hoped to reward the Prince for his anxiety to see her, by proving to him that the sight was worth the trouble) did nothing but teach her eyes to languish, bite her lips to make them look red, and pull her hair this way and the other ; till at length the audience began. But when the real ambassador appeared, I really thought that she would have fainted. She was so fully persuaded that this was the Prince in disguise, that when, instead of the most lovely countenance in the world, she beheld this pelican's nose hanging over a mouth, which appeared to be made with a gimblet, she exclaimed aloud, and with violence, "that the Prince of Ophir's *mouth* might water, but that the Princess of Bactria turned up her *nose* at him !" Not contented with this transport of indignation, she sank upon her knees before the whole assembly, and raising her eyes to heaven, "May Mahomet never have mercy upon my sins," she cried, "and may his Alcoran be my poison, if ever I marry the Prince of Ophir, till I become old and hideous enough to inspire him with the same aversion which the sight of him now creates in me." Having said this she kissed the earth, which is looked upon by the Bactrians as the most solemn manner of ratifying a vow.

The poor ambassador, who had not yet commenced his harangue, was extremely astonished at this aversion so openly avowed towards the most charming Prince in the universe. He pocketed the golden trumpet, which he was going to insert in his mouth in order to render his compliments audible, and quitted the audience-chamber in the same manner that

he had entered it ; but he ascended his post-chaise in such a storm of rage, that we all thought his nose would never get out of the city without setting it in flames, it appeared so red and fiery ! On the other hand, the Princess tore herself from the encircling arms of her father, gave a sound box on the ear to her governess, who was in vain endeavouring to pacify her, sprang upon the horse of one of the officers of the guard, and away she galloped astride to the oracle of the miraculous cock. On reaching the wood she descended, and was on the point of entering the temple, when by the glimmerings of the moonbeams she perceived a youth in bright armour seated at the foot of a lofty cedar, to which his courser was bound.

I need not explain that this stranger was the Prince of Ophir, whom (while flying from his father's court) chance had guided to the oraculous wood ; neither need I mention that Sapinella instantly fell in love with him to distraction.

" Gallant stranger," said she in a gentle voice, while her blushes made her cover her face with her fan, though she made no scruple of peeping at the Prince through an oval hole in the handle of it, " gallant stranger, pardon the intrusion of an unknown ! you behold in me the unfortunate Princess of Bactria, who——"

" Of Bactria !" exclaimed the Prince of Ophir, starting back in dismay. That name recalled to him all the horrors of matrimony ! Already he fancied himself married, already heard Sapinella called bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh ; and, unable to resist the impulse of his feelings, he sprang upon his horse, stuck his spurs into the animal's sides, and without saying adieu to my daughter, he soon left the oraculous wood a full league behind him.

Sapinella was not a little surprised at this abrupt departure. She gazed after him with her mouth wide open, nor had she succeeded in closing it, when the giant Feridoun stood before

her. Happening to have some business with the miraculous cock that evening, he entered the wood just as the Prince of Ophir left it. No sooner did he see my daughter, than he loved her, and no sooner did he love her than he told her so : but he had chosen a most unpropitious moment for making his addresses. She not only rejected them positively, but assured him that he was the most horrible creature she had ever seen, and that if he would come to the capital he might easily make a fortune by exhibiting himself as a monster. At the conclusion of this civil speech, she vaulted into her saddle without staying to consult the oracle, snapped her fingers at the Genius, in token of contempt, then gave her horse a kick, and galloped home again as hard as she galloped away.

Incensed at this behaviour, Feridoun had recourse to his spells : but when he found that they had no effect upon the fugitive, it struck him that she must certainly be under the protection of one of the three magic spinning-wheels, of which he had so long been in search. It was to preserve us from the malevolence of this very sorcerer, that our mother had advised our spinning the mysterious cord, which would render the power of the possessor superior to his, and would enable us to bind this formidable enemy hand and foot, whenever he should render himself obnoxious. We had neglected Mergian-Banou's prudent counsels, and (though it was then unknown to me) one member of our family had already experienced the fatal effects of our disobedience.

Feridoun had, it seems, taken a fancy to be Emperor of China, and invaded that kingdom at a time when grief for the recent loss of his wife rendered Tarif-Eldin the less able to repel the attack. However, conscious that though the loss of his wife was a bad thing, the loss of his empire would be a still worse, he exerted his military talents with such effect as to defeat the invaders ; and as the spinning-wheel protected him

from all supernatural enemies, Feridoun was obliged to regain the crystal island without having accomplished his object. On reaching his home, his first care was to consult his books as to the cause which rendered his most powerful spells without effect when exercised upon the Emperor of China. He now learned for the first time that there existed three spinning-wheels, once the property of the pre-adamite Sultanas ; that each of these sufficed to protect not only its owner, but his family, from every species of énchantment ; and that if they were collected and placed in the hands of the three most beautiful princesses in the world, they would fabricate a cord, which would make its possessor sovereign lord over all the Genii and sorcerers in existence, whether good, bad, or indifferent.

This intelligence made Feridoun set all his wits to work. The talismans in question (he well knew) could not be taken by force, nor could he become master of them except through a woman's hands. To a woman, then, he applied himself, and caused your merry mother, fair Moussellina, to stop at Pekin, in her road to her husband's dominions. Here, under the disguise of a dervise, he took care to explain to her the importance of the ebony spinning-wheel, and expatiated upon its virtues, till her desire to possess it became extreme. Tarif-Eldin was still sorrowing in widowhood ; but the Queen of Astracan soothed him and consoled him so comically, that in less than a week she had completely laughed his wife out of his heart, and herself into it. No sooner did she find him entirely in her power than she fixed the price of her favours at the surrender of the spinning-wheel ; though she was too much a woman of honour to intend to keep her word. My brother was infatuated ; the wheel was given into her hands, and that very night the Queen departed privately from Pekin, carrying with her the palladium of Tarif-Eldin's happiness. He soon felt the

fatal effects of his imprudence. Feridoun again invaded China, and with such success, that scarcely could a faithful courtier escape with my brother's two young sons, both of them still in the cradle.

Soon wearied of his conquest, Feridoun shortly after returned to the crystal island ; but he was not so soon weary of tormenting the unfortunate Emperor, whom he had transformed into an enormous cock, frequently amusing himself by making him fight matches against animals of the same species, and sometimes setting him up to be thrown at by little boys at an asper a-piece. At length even these amusements lost their relish, and one day he had actually ordered him to be fricasseed for dinner ; when my feathered relation perceived the magic hand-bell given to him by Caramoussal, which till then he had totally forgotten, and which the Genius (ignorant of its use) had brought with him to the island among other spoils, for the sake of the silver. Tarif-Eldin seized it with eagerness, and the very first tingle brought Caramoussal to his assistance.

The Enchanter's threats and expostulations induced Feridoun to spare the life of the human cock ; but it was only upon condition that he should act the part of the Bactrian oracle during a certain number of years, at the expiration of which term he should be delivered into the hands of Caramoussal. Accordingly, the Emperor was inclosed within the cage of the pinnacle, and compelled occasionally to deliver such oracles as the Genius (who frequently officiated as priestess himself) thought proper to suggest.

" But wherefore," said Moussellina, " did Feridoun suffer my mother to retain possession of the spinning-wheel ? For in her possession it still was when she died. Her principal confidante then gave me the key of the closet which contained it, accompanied by my mother's dying injunction not to unlock the door : an injunction which I never disobeyed till after

the matter as follows. It seems that it was a condition (though unknown to my brothers and myself) annexed to the possession of our spinning-wheels, that the children of those in whose custody they were kept, should each have some personal perfection, so exquisite as actually to become a defect; and such was the case with my daughter's foot; with your skin, adorable Moussellina, and with the respective noses of the two Princes of China. It was also decreed that no cloth should be suffered to touch that particular part without causing extreme pain, except the first piece which should be applied to it. Thus it was, my fair niece, that *you* could only wear one particular shift; that Sapinella could only be fitted with one particular pair of slippers; and that my Chinese nephews could only blow their noses with one particular pocket-handkerchief. I must not, however, omit to mention, that these several articles had the peculiar property of never wearing out, or of requiring washing.

Feridoun discovered this circumstance, and resolved to deprive Sapinella of her slipper. This accomplished, and my daughter thrown into the greatest perplexity, he next assumed the form of my prime minister, and assured my too credulous Queen, that the sandal-wood chest, which I kept locked so carefully, contained a remedy for her darling's distress. Nay, so artfully did he work upon her maternal feelings, that at length she broke open the mysterious chest. First, she drew forth the ebony spinning-wheel: not conceiving how this machine could possibly supply her with slippers for Sapinella, she proceeded to search deeper, and in the meanwhile requested her adviser to be so obliging as to hold the talisman for a moment. Ah! how willingly the traitor complied! No sooner was it in his hands, than he resumed his natural form. Farruknaz screamed with terror and surprise; I heard the cry, and hastening with my daughter to her assistance, beheld for the first time my colossal enemy.

"King of Denmark," said he, "listen with attention to my commands. This talisman was stolen from my father by Mergian-Banou: justly should I punish you for having detained from me so long my paternal inheritance; but in consideration of the passion with which your daughter has inspired me, your offence shall be pardoned, and my enmity converted into friendship, provided the fair Sapinella consents to become my bride."

The poor Princess was frightened out of her little wits at this proposal: but my wife, who had a natural turn for satire, and was highly incensed at having been over-reached, thought proper to indulge her propensity at the giant's expense. This she did with such success, and rendered Feridoun so irresistibly ludicrous, that in spite of my vexation I laughed, till I was ready to expire. This was highly imprudent in both of us, for the giant could no more command his temper than I could my muscles, or the Queen her tongue; and suddenly lifting up his left leg, he without any ceremony made—(you need not put up your fans, ladies)—he suddenly made a nail as big as a scimitar issue from his great toe, with which tremendous instrument, when I was in the very midst of a horse-laugh, he gave my mouth such a slicer, that he slit it completely from ear to ear: then grasping my wife by the nape of her neck, he rose with her into the air; where, horrible to tell! we saw him with his enormous nail cut her up as dexterously as the most expert butcher could have done a calf. This done, he hurled her limbs to different quarters of the globe, a leg one way, and an arm another; while the blood flowed from them in such quantities, that it tinged the waters on which it fell, and has caused that part of the ocean to be called ever since by the name of the Red Sea.

This horrible scene performed, the Genius re-descended to inform us that he would return on that day twelvemonth; when, if my daughter still refused his hand, he would inflict on

us the most exemplary punishment. He added, that to teach me better manners than to laugh at people before their faces, my mouth should never return to its original size, till I had found another of the same dimensions ; and having said this, he disappeared with the fatal spinning-wheel.

For some time I could do nothing but lament my wife, who had not a single fault in her whole composition, except having a passion for satire and a pair of bandy legs. (At this remark from the King, the white arms were observed to turn the wheel with incredible velocity ; but Fortimbrass did not notice this circumstance. He proceeded) :—When my grief was somewhat abated, I hastened in search of the silver bell, which would summon Caramoussal to my assistance, and which till then I had neglected. What was my despair at learning that the Queen, being ignorant of its secret qualities, and thinking it old-fashioned, had caused it to be melted down, and converted into a butter-boat for her own use ! I was near losing my senses at this discovery ; and Sapinella really lost hers, not only through fear of the Genius, but from pain at walking unshod with feet so delicate. The shoemakers endeavoured to fit her in vain ; and as at first I ascribed their failure to their awkwardness, in a moment of passion I happened to hang two or three of the poor devils, for which, however, I was afterwards very sorry. At length I judged it best to publish in every foreign kingdom as well as my own, that whoever could produce a shoe that would fit Sapinella, or a mouth as large as my own, should espouse the Princess, and be heir to my dominions. These ambassadors were ordered, on pain of death, never again to set foot in Denmark, till they had succeeded in their search : while, on the other hand, a messenger, whom I dispatched to Caramoussal's residence on Mount Atlas, was commanded to return with all possible speed.

He was but just in time : a single day only was wanting to

complete the year, when Caramoussal arrived. Before I had time to request it, he promised me his protection, at the same time assuring me, that till my messenger's arrival he had been ignorant of my distress, having trusted to my ringing the silver bell. He also comforted me with the prospect of ultimate happiness and tranquillity; but added, that for the present he could not prevent Feridoun from inflicting the most cruel calamities both upon myself and my daughter. He likewise made known to me Tarif-Eldin's adventures, whose servitude to the Genius was at length expired, and whom he had just left upon Mount Atlas. He concluded by lamenting the increase of Feridoun's power, who had obtained possession of another spinning-wheel by practising the same artifice by which he had deprived Sapinella of her slipper, upon the Princess of Astracan, who had lately been robbed of her single shift.

"Alas! he told you but too true!" exclaimed Moussellina, in this part of her uncle's narrative; "assuming the form of my nurse, he persuaded me that he could easily spin me a proper piece of cambric, provided he were furnished with the ebony wheel, so carefully locked up in my mother's closet. I gave it into his hands, and he vanished with it instantly. This it was, which, upon hearing of the arrival of Feridoun's wife, put it into my head that she might possibly have got my shift; and I made bold to take up the corner of hers, in order to examine the mark, for which liberty I beg her ten thousand pardons."

Crystallina received this apology very graciously, but requested the Princess to suffer Fortimbrass to proceed with his history, being extremely curious to hear its conclusion, I now began to suspect that I was spinning a shift for the lovely Moussellina; and feeling for the awkwardness of her highness's situation, I redoubled my diligence, while Fortimbrass proceeded as follows:—

Caramoussal now summoned my daughter. Great was her surprise and grief at learning that the handsome stranger was no other than the Prince of Ophir, and at being reminded of her imprudent oath. The Enchanter also took this opportunity of reading her a lecture upon swearing, assuring her that no oaths were proper in a young lady's mouth stronger than "Bless my heart!" "Ods-fish!" or at most, "By the living jingo!" He was still holding forth upon this topic when the Genius arrived.

Greatly was he displeased at Caramoussal's presence, whose skill in astrology and possession of the third talisman, rendered him a formidable antagonist. My brother perceived, and made use of his confusion to bring him to some reasonable treaty, and after much parley the following conditions were settled between the Enchanters. Sapinella was doomed to reside upon Mount Atlas, under a form the most frightful, till some Prince of the name of Facardin should arrive there, and either accept her hand at first sight, or devour Feridoun's left leg raw, before the Genius was able to prevent him; but if no such event took place during twenty years, she was then to become Feridoun's undisputed property. My sentence was to wear the form of some animal, and the only indulgence granted me was the choice what particular animal it should be. It was, however, stipulated by Caramoussal, that if by any means I could manage to draw blood from my enemy, I should instantly resume my natural shape. With regard to Tarif Eldin, it was enacted that he should never leave off crowing till a cock could be found, whose powers of flying were as extraordinary as those with which the Genius (in order to enlarge the sphere of his amusements) had endowed the unfortunate Emperor. On the other hand, Feridoun was allowed free admission to Caramoussal's grotto, in order that he might entertain no doubts of Sapinella's performing strictly the

articles of the treaty ; but so far was he from being permitted to take any advantage of these interviews, that he was even forbidden to press the tip of her little finger. These conditions being agreed to, the giant disappeared, to our very great satisfaction.

As a clause in the treaty forbade my residing with my daughter, my brother advised my taking up my abode in the isle of lions, under the form of one of those animals. This island being close to Mount Atlas, I could then receive the earliest intelligence of any change in my daughter's situation ; and he promised that she should meet me at the mountain's foot every evening, when, during a full hour, she should enjoy her natural shape. He next comforted my daughter with the assurance that the twenty years of enchantment should not be reckoned in her life, and that when the charm should be dissolved she should still find herself in all the bloom and beauty of sixteen. Then taking an affectionate farewell, he transported her to the top of Mount Atlas, and I immediately found myself upon all fours in the isle of lions.

Every evening I swam to the opposite shore, where Caramoussal failed not to conduct my daughter and the imperial cock. In these visits I learned many particulars of which I was till then ignorant. It seems Caramoussal's books had taught him that the bending of the famous bow of Ulysses would ascertain the person destined to disenchant my daughter. This was also no secret to Feridoun ; but fortunately the bow was already in my brother's possession. Caramoussal also informed me that he daily expected a prince to arrive at Mount Atlas, on whom he placed his strongest hopes of reversing Feridoun's spells ; and that though my unhappy Queen had, it is true, been chopped in pieces, yet consideration for his future mother-in-law had induced Feridoun to preserve her in existence. He should, therefore, immediately dispatch an

emissary to collect her scattered but still animated limbs, and he doubted not his being able to stitch them together again so cleverly with a needle and thread, that the nicest eye should be unable to detect the deception. Her hands and arms (he had the pleasure to assure me) were already in his possession; and, as she was extremely proud of their beauty, he had gratified her innocent vanity by cutting two holes in the door of his grotto, through which she never failed to pass her arms on the arrival of any stranger. She generally affected to be turning the handle of the spinning-wheel; and by this device she contrived to secure the stranger's admiration of her alabaster hands, without being mortified by his discovering that the rest of her person was running wild about the universe. Accordingly, she frequently profited by this amusement; and Sapinella, having no better means of passing her time, occasionally beguiled her ennui by the same occupation. These conversations lasted during an hour; after which Sapinella regained the summit of Mount Atlas, while I swam back to the isle of lions.

Near a year elapsed, and, though many persons had attempted it, the bow of Ulysses remained unbeat. At length the day arrived when the annual hunting-match was accustomed to take place. You must undoubtedly have heard of this singular festival, whose novelty excited in me no small degree of expectation: and I was pleased with the opportunity of ascertaining whether animals on four legs receive as much pleasure from being hunted as animals upon two legs receive from hunting them,—a point which had always appeared to me somewhat questionable. On the appointed morning I failed not to be at the sea-shore, where about seven hundred of my companions were already assembled. As I was evidently a stranger, they very politely insisted on my taking the command, and would not hear of a refusal, though I protested

that I should be perfectly contented with a cornetcy, or at most with a troop. But I soon found that in heading such forces but little honour could be gained : no sooner was a cock heard to crow than they fled in confusion, fell into the nets of the hunters, and I soon saw eleven landed on the opposite shore.

One was still wanting to complete the usual number. Heaven and earth ! how great was my joy when I recognised in the warrior who remained after his companions, for the purpose of taking the twelfth lion, the very person who (as Caramousseal had assured me) was most likely to effect my daughter's deliverance. I flew to meet him, intending to discover myself, and request him to proceed to Mount Atlas without a moment's delay. But my kind intentions were frustrated. Seeing me run towards him open-mouthed, he very naturally concluded that I meant to make a dinner of him ; and under this persuasion he attacked me so furiously, that I was obliged to return his blows in my own defence. Still I endeavoured to make him aware of his mistake ; but the cock kept crowing so loud, and his female companion exerted her lungs so successfully, that the knight could not possibly hear a word that I said to him. At length, being quite out of patience, I just gave him a scratch, which (I thought) would disable him from fighting for the present ; and, in order to stop the noise a little, I made bold to swallow the cock at a mouthful. I then returned to my antagonist ; but, without attending to the signs by which I strove to express that I had something to say to him, he very uncivilly chopped off my left paw. Anguish deprived me of my senses, and I had only time to pronounce his name before I fainted away. During my swoon Caramousseal (who, to do him justice, never discovered any danger till it was too late to prevent it) conveyed me to his grotto, fixed on my severed hand with an excellent salve of our

mother's own composition, and I had the satisfaction of seeing it once more united to my arm. However, I long felt the effects of the wound, and (as you see) I am still obliged to carry my arm in a sling.

While loss of blood still confined me to my bed, Facardin, Prince of Ophir, arrived at the grotto, bent the bow of Ulysses, and finding my daughter in her horrible metamorphosis, he positively rejected the offer of her hand. He also despised her advice, not to drink from a certain enchanted fountain ; the consequence was, that his heart immediately became inflammable at the sight of every female ; while, on the other hand, so singular a change took place in his person, as in the eyes of every female rendered him unavoidably an object of ridicule and disgust. Very different, therefore, were the impressions produced upon them by a second interview. Sabinella had resumed her original form, and the Prince was struck with admiration at her beauty ; while she, on the other hand, could only look upon him with the most violent aversion. Aware, however, that on him depended her strongest hopes of deliverance, and also that, during their temporary separation, he had vanquished Feridoun in single combat, and had actually cut off the fatal leg, she endeavoured to soften the severity of her countenance, and encouraged her lover with smiles to persevere in the adventure. The leg was served up to him ; he was persuaded to begin upon it ; he had already swallowed several slices, and all was going on in the most prosperous manner imaginable, when Sabinella felt that her single hour of beauty was elapsed. Shocked at the thought of being recognised for the woman whose deformity had already excited in him such strong sentiments of disgust, she thought it best to make her escape before the transformation could take place, and leave the Prince to finish his nauseous meal by himself. Most unfortunate were the consequences of her ill-timed vanity,

Seeing her run away, the Prince thought proper to run after her; Feridoun seized his mysterious leg, clapped it on again, and with it resumed all his former power. He then raised a whirlwind, which rolled Facardin from the top of the mountain to the bottom, and thus concluded an adventure on which we had so long grounded our strongest expectations.

They say, and very truly, that misfortunes never come single. It was soon discovered that, during the confusion occasioned by the Prince of Ophir's visit, our enemy had contrived to carry off the Ulyssean bow. This loss almost deprived the poor Astronomer of the little wits which Heaven had vouchsafed to grant him. This weapon was absolutely necessary for Sapinella's deliverance, and to recover it at any rate was an indispensable duty. Fortunately, the Prince of Fez (to whom Feridoun intrusted it, thinking my brother less likely to discover the place of its concealment when in the possession of a stranger, than to regain it while under his own care) disobeyed the command of never unlocking the chest in which it was deposited. It was opened. As luck would have it, the imperial cock (whom Caramoussal had despatched in search of the bow) was at that moment hovering over the palace-gardens of Serendip. Instantly, he darted down, carried off the bow, and it is the very same which you now see in my possession.

No sooner was I recovered from my wound, than Feridoun insisted upon my recommencing beast, and out of pure spite and ill nature transported me to that part of the globe which is at the greatest distance from Mount Atlas. Most gladly would I have returned thither; but I was ignorant of the way, and had no book of the roads. My joy, therefore, was boundless when the King of Astracan happened to send me under the form of an ourang-outang, in common with many others of my species, as a present to Caramoussal. Feridoun's spells had prevented that enchanter from knowing what was become

of me. He could only discover, that after alternately assuming the appearances of an hippopotamus, an armadillo, and a tortoise-shell cat, I had at length determined upon remaining a monkey for the rest of my bestial existence ; in consequence of which, he gave all who wished to consult him to understand that a present of those animals would be the most certain means of conciliating his protection ; and he trusted that I should, one day or other, be included in the number of those transmitted to him.

That confidence at length proved well-founded ; I reached the grotto, and with some difficulty Feridoun was prevailed upon to permit my residing upon Mount Atlas, as also to resume my original form during the whole day ; it was thus on which the ambassadors from Astracan had their audience of Caramoussal. They had been very polite to me on the road ; and I was fortunate enough to return their civilities on their way back again, by rescuing them from two or three hundred lions (I forget the exact number) who had the impertinence to make a party to breakfast upon the ill-fated ambassadors : but the lions soon found that there went two words to that bargain. Aware of their intention, my brother despatched me to the scene of action, and being armed with the Ulyscean bow (which, since the Prince of Ophir's success, required no great strength to use) I easily defeated the assailants, and rescued my friends.

My time on Mount Atlas passed very quietly and very dully till the other morning, when my brother accosted me with a joyful countenance.

"I have at length," said he, "discovered a remedy for all our misfortunes. Hasten to the Princess of Astracan ; with her you will find Feridoun, under the form of a matron. Whilst he is off his guard, take an opportunity to draw blood from him, and your original shape will be immediately restored."

Leave Sapinella's destiny to my care ; the emperor will immediately transport you into Moussellina's presence ; mount him, and away ! ”

“ I obeyed ; Sapinella obtained permission to accompany me hither for the sake of a little air and exercise. Of what followed, my dear niece, you have been an eye-witness ; nor will you be surprised at the emotion produced in my bosom on beholding these beautiful white arms, when I mention that I doubt not their having formerly been the property of my beloved and imprudent consort.

With another flood of tears, Fortimbrass here concluded his affecting narrative. The evening being far advanced, the princess gave over work. Instantly the beautiful arms disappeared with the third spinning-wheel ; the two first were again committed to my custody. Fortimbrass embraced his niece ; she curtseyed, we bowed, and the assembly broke up in good order.

For my part, I followed the brother Facardins to their apartment, expecting to be as agreeably entertained with the history of the second as I had been with that of the first. Great, therefore, was my disappointment, when on my requesting him to relate his adventures, he assured me, that except those in the crystal island, he had never met with anything extraordinary in the whole course of his life.

“ What ! ” cried I, “ have you really reached the age of one-and-twenty without having once been turned into a blue bear or a china tea-pot ? Are you really unlucky enough never to have seen so much as a single kingdom transformed into a fish-pond ? never to have destroyed a single black giant or fiery dragon, nor rescued from some sorcerer's den two or three dozen of bewitched queens and metamorphosed princesses ? The most extraordinary thing that I ever heard of ! Why, what can you have been doing all this time ? ”

“ Just what other people do,” answered he ; “ I ate and

drank a good deal, made love occasionally, said little, thought less, and yawned immoderately. I was educated in Cappadocia ; it is a damned stupid country : the King of it was my guardian ; he was a damned stupid old fellow. I thought books a bore, and regularly played truant ; my tutor as regularly chastised me, and I thought flogging a greater bore than books. I set out on my travels, bought an easy palanquin, and made the tour of Asia with my eyes shut. I next prepared to pay Africa a similar visit. I embarked on board a felucca ; my hammock was a very good one, and I slept there very comfortably. Unluckily, a violent storm woke me from a sound nap ; I yawned, rubbed my eyes, and was drowned ; I thought this the greatest bore of all. The rest you know ; and I shall only add, that Moussellina has made an impression on my heart so forcible, that——”

He accompanied his love confession with so hearty a yawn, that it produced an instantaneous drowsiness upon his hearers. We parted for the night, and scarcely had I thrown myself on my couch, before I fell into a profound slumber : I was not long permitted to enjoy it.

Midnight was already past. The day appointed for the laughing contest ; that day, so long, so earnestly expected ; that day, pregnant with Moussellina's fate and with the conclusion of so many wonderful events ; that day was now already an hour old.

“I am glad of it, with all my heart and soul,” cried Schahriar, rubbing his hands ; “now, then, we shall hear whether the Queen of Denmark got tacked together again ; who succeeded in killing the crocodile, and making the Princess laugh ; what became of the monkey and his daughter ; and how Moussellina almost jumped out of her skin, for joy at getting a shift next to it. Tell away, my good friend ! I die to know what happened on that important morning.”

" Since your Majesty," resumed Trebizonde, " is so anxious to know the whole affair, I hasten to inform you without losing a moment, that I am quite ignorant of every particular."

" The devil you are ! " exclaimed the Sultan, jumping bolt upright in his bed.

" It is but too true ! " rejoined Facardin ; " an extraordinary accident on that very morning compelled me to quit the tents of Astracan.

" Your Majesty may remember, that in order to possess the spinning-wheels, it was necessary to obtain them voluntarily from some female hand. To regain these treasures, Feridoun had craftily enough addressed himself to Crystallina. Perceiving that her passion for the tall Facardin (for thus is he best distinguished) had revived, he promised to make her Empress of China, and (waving his own claim to her hand) to unite her to the object of her choice, provided she would steal the talismans from my charge, and put them once more in his power. To make this proposal, was his motive for visiting Moussellina's tent that evening. Crystallina had observed with much displeasure the glances which passed between the Princess and her former admirer. Love, jealousy, revenge, and above all curiosity to know whether Facardin was much changed since their parting,—all these motives made her eagerly embrace Feridoun's offers.

" Accordingly, during my absence she concealed herself in my chamber ; and scarcely was I asleep before the wheels were in her possession. Now then her business was to leave the tent as quickly as possible ; but she could not resist her curiosity to know whether I usually slept upon my back or on one side. For this purpose she deposited the talismans on the ground, took the night-lamp, and softly approached my couch. As she leaned over me, a drop of burning oil fell on my shoulder. A cry of pain convinced the intruder that I was

disturbed ; and, hastily dropping the lamp, she caught up the spinning-wheels, and fled from the chamber. She fled not unpursued ; the importance of my loss flashed upon my mind instantly ; I started from my couch, and followed her——”

“Without dressing yourself ? ” exclaimed Dinarzade ; “oh ! monstrous ! No wonder that Crystallina ran away ; in such a situation I should have out-stripped the winds in swiftness, nor would ever have forgiven you for not staying at least to slip on a bed-gown.”

“Fair Dinarzade,” replied the Prince smiling, “your extreme delicacy has taken the alarm without reason. I certainly was not in full dress ; still my appearance was by no means so terrible as your lively fancy pictures it, as from infancy I have been accustomed to sleep in a waistcoat and drawers of rose-coloured taffeta.”

“And a very silly custom too ! ” observed Dinarzade pettishly.

“I had very strong reasons for adopting it,” answered Facardin, “but which I cannot explain to you at present. Perhaps a time may come when——. But I proceed with my story, which now approaches its conclusion. I pursued the thief so swiftly, that I overtook her at the entrance of the tent ; there Feridoun was waiting for her ; but before she could deliver the talismans into his hands, I fortunately seized and pulled her back again by the tail of her shift. To obtain the wheels from her against her consent I well knew to be impossible. All that I could do was to prevent her giving them to the Genius ; this I for some time effected, by contriving, whenever he put himself in her way, to whisk her suddenly round to the other side, till Feridoun, losing all patience, muttered a few unintelligible words, and, twisting his hand in Crystallina’s long tresses, (which a gust of wind happened to bring within his reach,) he sprang with her into the air ; and as I persisted in

detaining her by the aforesaid cambrie, away we all three flew together, to the infinite surprise and terror of a numerous audience, attracted by the noise of our dispute.

"Crystallina screamed so loud, that it was quite a wonder ; nor was I by any means pleased to find myself hanging in mid-air by so ticklish a dependence as the tail of a lady's shift. However, I did not retain this situation long. The Genius, having as little taste for my society as I had for his, drew a large pair of shears from his girdle, snipped off the piece of linen by which I was holding, and restored me to the earth with the greatest possible expedition. Down I came, tumbling head over heels ; but long before I reached terra firma, I had completely lost my senses.

"On their return, I was not a little surprised to find myself on a sofa in my own palace at Trebizonde. A venerable man was standing near me, in whom I instantly recognised the admirable Caramoussal."

"Recognised him ?" repeated the Sultan ; "why, had you ever seen him before ?"

"Frequently," answered Facardin ; "but having been enjoined by him never to reveal what has passed between us, in this narrative of my adventures I have carefully avoided touching upon those which relate to the Enchanter. Suffice it to say, that I was not surprised to hear that I was indebted to his care for my late escape from destruction. He also informed me that he had at length discovered the only certain means for concluding the misfortunes of his family, and he gave me full instructions as to the part which I was destined to perform. In the execution of it I have been engaged ever since. Our plot succeeds. Feridoun is our dupe completely ; his power will soon be at an end, and I shall then relate to your majesty by what means Caramoussal has attained his object. At present you must excuse my not saying a syllable more upon

the subject, and I have now the honour to leave you at the end of my story, as much in the dark as you were at the beginning."

The Prince was silent ; surprise at the abrupt conclusion of his history for some moments compelled his hearers to follow his example, but Schahriar at length recovered himself.

"And so," said he, in an angry voice, "and so you really mean to leave your story unfinished? Now, my worthy friend, have the goodness to listen to *me* for a few moments. If you don't instantly and on the spot relate every tittle that has passed between you and that old he-witch Caramoussal, as I'm a sultan and a sinner, I'll treat you no better than if you were my wife! and if you refuse to conclude your adventures yourself, never may I speak again, if I don't do it for you with two yards and a half of whip-cord : now that's flat!"—and at the same time clapping his hands, he called the guard of black eunuchs into the chamber.

"Though your threats cannot alarm me," replied the Prince, "my anxiety to gratify your majesty induces me to relate every circumstance which I can possibly disclose with safety. Know then, that since my return to your majesty's dominions, no sooner does the clock point to midnight than—hark! it strikes at this moment!"—and at the same instant a loud burst of thunder shook the room, a bright flame enveloped Facardin, and he instantly vanished from the eyes of the astonished spectators.

Before they were perfectly recovered from their surprise at this unexpected incident, the door of the royal apartment was suddenly thrown open, and the Lord Chamberlain entering in the greatest hurry and confusion, put the following letter into the Sultan's hands :—

"Caramoussal, Lord of Mount Atlas, presents his best compliments to the Sultan and Sultana of the Indies, and

informs them, that if not inconvenient, the King and Queen of Denmark, the Kings of Astracan and Ophir, Zemin Prince of Fez, and the Emperor of China with his two sons, intend having the honour of breakfasting with their sublime Majesties."

Great was the joy of Schahriar and the two beautiful sisters at this promised visit of such illustrious and extraordinary personages. They were expected every moment, and therefore no time was to be lost in preparing for their reception. The news spread through the palace like wild-fire, and never was there such an uproar known in it since the peculiar taste of the first Sultana was discovered. In five minutes all was noise, and bustle, and confusion ; everybody was conscious that on this important occasion a great deal was to be done, and everybody had so much to do, that nobody did anything. Servants ran here and there, backwards and forwards, without knowing of what they were in search ; lords and ladies were seen flying about in all directions, some full-dressed, some half-dressed, some not dressed at all ; whoever wanted one thing was sure to get another ; Scherazade asked for a wash-ball, and they brought her a chaffing-dish of charcoal ; and when the Grand Vizier called for his court-going slippers, they crammed his mouth with a buttered muffin.

In spite of all these accidents, the royal family made so much expedition that they were ready before the sentinels (who were stationed on the loftiest towers) announced the approach of a numerous and brilliant cavalcade. Soon after, the expected guests entered the palace, and were received in a manner suitable to their distinguished rank. After many compliments had passed on both sides, than which nothing could be more polite or less to the purpose, the whole company partook of an entertainment truly magnificent, and served up in the very best taste. Dinarzade paid particular attention to the appearance of the Queen of Denmark : her beauty she could not question ;

but she whispered her sister—"that the poor woman had been very clumsily sewed together, and that she plainly discovered a seam, where the tailor had stitched her nose on." She also occasionally touched upon the subject of crooked legs, at the same time taking care to convince the company that her own were straight; nor could all Scherazade's frowns prevent her from declaring aloud, that "long petticoats were like charity, and frequently covered a multitude of defects." Luckily, the Queen of Denmark was too well pleased at finding herself all of a piece again, to suffer these hints to ruffle her temper, and the repast was finished in undisturbed harmony.

And now it was that Schahriar requested to be informed to what occasion he was indebted for the honour of this visit, and what adventures had taken place since the Prince of Trebizonde's departure from the tents of Astracan. Great was his surprise and pleasure, when Fortimbrass assured him that the Princes of China were no other than the brother Facardins, of whom he had already heard so much; and Facardin of the Grotto being unanimously requested to satisfy the Sultan's curiosity, he readily complied, and commenced as follows:—

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF FACARDIN OF THE GROTTO.

It is needless to inform you (and therefore, following the example of the best historians, I shall not fail to relate it) that the sudden elopement of Trebizonde and his fair companion occasioned no slight surprise and sorrow. As for Moussellina, she was inconsolable for the loss of her spinning-wheel, and became more grave than ever, which was a great discouragement to her illustrious admirers. My brother and myself did our best to comfort the Princess, to whom we were presented next day as relations by our good uncle, the King of Denmark,

"The King your uncle?" interrupted Schahriar; oh! ay! very true! But pray, my dear sir, how did you find out this connexion?"

"By my nose," answered Facardin of the Grotto.

"Your nose!" repeated the astonished Sultan: "what, then, did you know your uncle by his smell? Or perhaps you only mean, that you smelt out the secret?"

"By no means," said Facardin; "the fact is, that the secret lay hid in my pocket-handkerchief. Caramoussal informs me, that you have heard from the Prince of Trebizonde all that passed in the tents of Astracan previous to that Prince's departure. Doubtless, you must remember that Fortimbrass mentioned in his history that his nephews, the two Princes of China, had their noses formed of so delicate a texture, as only to permit their using a particular pocket-handkerchief. The truth flashed upon me the very first time that I blew my nose after hearing this remark; and my brother's nostrils proving to be endowed with a similar sensibility, we boldly claimed kindred with Fortimbrass on the succeeding day. He heard us with attention, recognised our pocket-handkerchiefs to have once been his mother's (indeed, they were still marked with an M. B. at the corners,) and instantly acknowledged us for his nephews in the most gracious manner possible.

"The hour appointed for the merry contest arrived. Though my heart was devoted to another, I still entered my name upon the list of Moussellina's admirers, being resolved (in case of success) to resign my claim in favour of my brother, upon whom she had made a most forcible impression. The Princess took her place; the lots were drawn, and each, as his name was called, advanced to attack Moussellina's risible muscles. Several had already failed; at length my name was pronounced, and I was on the point of obeying the summons, when I stopped on hearing the sound of a trumpet. The crowd opened to the

right and left, and our assembly was augmented by the arrival of the King of Ophir."

"I beg ten thousand pardons!" said Scherazade; "but pray, is that the gentleman?"

"The very same," replied Facardin; "by the death of his father, he is now in possession of the crown of Ophir."

"Then let me beg," she continued, "that before you go any further, we may hear what happened to him in Denmark."

"Nothing of consequence," replied the King of Ophir very politely. "On my arrival at court, I found that the King, Queen, and Princess had all disappeared; that the Prime Minister had usurped the crown; and what was worse than all, that the Danish ladies have the largest splay-feet in the universe."

"Especially those whose legs are bandy!" said Dinarzade; but the Sultan, clapping his hand before her mouth, prevented her observation from being heard. The King of Ophir proceeded.

"Having sought in vain for a foot that would fit my adorable slipper, I quitted Denmark, and soon after encountered the Prince of Trebizonde! After having had the misfortune to meet with the King of Astracan's orchestra, (whose taste in music I must, however, confess to be truly original,) I wandered from place to place, occasionally knocking a few giants on the head, and now and then killing a stray dragon or two; but nothing unusual happened to me, till I reached the presence of Moussellina. Here, as I performed a principal part, and as modesty forbids my relating my exploits myself, I must request the Prince of China to resume his narrative."

Facardin of the Grotto complied in the following terms:—

Moussellina rose from her throne, and advanced to welcome her royal visitor. No sooner did the king behold her, than his heart (that heart so easily inflamed!) became the captive of her

eyes. His passion was too violent to be concealed for a moment : throwing himself at her feet, and seizing her ivory hand—"Angel! Goddess! Houri!" he exclaimed ; "why have you left your celestial abode to blind with the radiance of your beauty?"—But I need not repeat the amorous rhapsody with which he favoured us, for his words were soon drowned in an universal shout of astonishment. Conceive our feelings, magnanimous Schahriar ! No sooner did the kneeling monarch commence his love-declaration than his chin began to lengthen, and before he had reached the end of his first sentence, its extent was truly wonderful and tremendous. At the same time an infinite number of little horns sprouted from every part of it, variegated with all the colours of the rainbow.

Hedless of this circumstance, the king still continued to declare his passion, and still his chin continued to increase its dimensions ; till stretching itself quite across the tent, it fairly lodged itself within the wide-extended jaws of Fortimbrass, who unluckily stood opposite to him, gazing at this unaccountable phenomenon. No sooner did the King of Denmark find his mouth so unexpectedly invaded, than he hastily retreated, but in vain. The further that he retired the longer the chin grew, nor could he fly half so fast as his persecutor followed. By this time the tip of this preposterous feature had actually found its way into his throat ; the horns tickled him terribly ; and as it did not yet seem to have reached its full growth, he began to entertain serious apprehensions of being spitted upon his neighbour's chin like a woodcock. Greatly alarmed, he tried every imaginable means to effect his escape ; and you will easily conceive that the postures into which he threw himself for this purpose, afforded no less mirth to the spectators than his persecutor's perseverance in pleading his passion (apparently quite unconscious, or quite careless, as to what his chin was about) excited surprise. But greatly was that surprise increased,

when overcome by her uncle's ridiculous distress, by the strange and grotesque contortions of his monstrous mouth, and (above all) by the singularity of her admirer's making love with his chin in another man's stomach, Moussellina, for the first time in her life, burst into a violent fit of laughter, and threw herself back in her elbow-chair to indulge her merriment at her ease !

Fortimbrass could endure his situation no longer. Finding himself the jest of the whole assembly, and alarmed at the length of this embarrassing adventure, to which he literally could see no end, he suddenly gnashed his teeth together, snapped off a great piece of the intruding chin, and then unclosing his monstrous jaws, he spit out at the least three yards and a quarter. Instantly, the remainder of the stranger's chin shrunk to its natural size ; no blood issued from the wound, nor was there any vestige of the bite. On the contrary, the King of Ophir seemed to awaken as from a dream. He gazed around him with a look of astonishment, rose hastily from his knees, and after examining Moussellina with an indifferent air, he made her a cold bow and retired from the circle.

As if willing to make up for lost time, the Princess laughed for three quarters of an hour without ceasing ; then suddenly recollecting herself, she burst into tears, and cried for three quarters of an hour more. She had imbibed a sincere affection for my brother, and could not reflect without inexpressible sorrow that her mirth had made her the property of the King of Ophir. Her grief was shared by her disappointed admirers. Universal, therefore, was the satisfaction, when the King of Ophir advanced and addressed her as follows :—

" Weep not, fair Princess, nor suspect me of wishing to force your affections by insisting on a claim whose nature I consider as degrading both to you and to myself. Never will I gain my bride by the talent of making myself ridiculous ; and when I marry, I hope to owe the heart of my mistress to the

strength of my attachment, not to the length of my chin ; but before I proceed, let me thank your illustrious uncle for the service which he has rendered me, in snapping off a part of that preposterous feature. Doubtless, the enchanted water, which I drank upon Mount Atlas, rendered my heart susceptible of love at the sight of every female, and also increased the dimensions of my chin, whenever I was under the influence of the tender passion. No wonder that my addresses met with so little success ! Though I was not aware of it myself, this personal enormity must certainly have rendered me a disgusting object in the eyes of the numerous beauties at whose feet I have sighed. I now feel that the spell is broken which kindled these fictitious flames in my bosom. I feel, too, that even your charms, fair Princess, transcendent as they are, cannot banish the remembrance of the lovely huntress of the grotto. For myself, then, I have only to request that you will try on this slipper ; in return for which condescension, I here renounce my claim to your hand, declaring that he only whose valour can succeed in killing the crocodile is worthy the possession of such inestimable beauty."

A shout of applause followed this generous speech ; the rivals eagerly accepted the proposal ; but the Prince of Fez (who must blush to hear me mention that Moussellina's superior charms had made him forget his engagements to the Princess Nour) was particularly delighted ; and his head being still full of the fictitious character which he was dressed to play, he clapped his false wings, and crowed thrice with such precise imitation, that an eagle mistook him for a real cock, and pouncing him in her talons, bore him away with the greatest celerity.

The spectators were petrified with grief and surprise, all but the King of Ophir. Snatching the bow and quiver with which Fortimbrass was furnished, he despatched an arrow, which pierced the robber through and through, and she instantly

released her prey. Down tumbled the Prince ; all ran in hopes of catching him ; but before he either reached us or the ground, out of the river rushed the enormous crocodile, received him in his jaws, and bolted him as if he had been an oyster. The monster was now for retreating ; but eager to assert his claim to Moussellina, one of her admirers was already prepared to attack him. Alas ! he soon followed the unfortunate Zemin. Other combatants still succeeded, and were all lodged successively in the same dwelling-house, which appeared to be wonderfully spacious. My brother held out longer than the rest ; nor were we quite without hopes of his ultimate success, till the monster suddenly gave him so terrible a gash with a nail belonging to one of his hinder feet, that he sank on the earth bleeding and insensible. Moussellina screamed and fainted. Far different were the emotions of the King of Ophir. His face was instantly flushed with joy ; and rushing upon the crocodile, (who was busy in swallowing my brother, and being embarrassed by one of the spurs, which stuck in his throat, perceived not the approach of this fresh antagonist,) he seized him by the left leg, and chopped it off at a single blow.

A shout of joy applauded the action ; but amazement again chained us in silence, when we saw the monarch lift the bleeding member to his mouth and swallow a large piece of it. With screams of rage the monster pursued him ; but being obliged to hop along upon three legs, he overtook him not till the King had fairly devoured every bit of it except the bone. The great toe formed the last mouthful ; and no sooner did it enter the King of Ophir's lips than an enormous volume of fire and smoke issued from the crocodile's, who instantly fell lifeless upon the ground.

We ran eagerly and with one consent to inspect the monster. Conceive our surprise at discovering him to be composed of nothing but painted pasteboard ! That such a machine could

have swallowed even so much as Moussellina's shift, not to mention men, women, and children, appeared to us scarcely possible ; but the President of the Royal Astracanical Society proved to us, by arguments quite incontrovertible, that it was not only possible, but extremely natural, for pasteboard not merely to swallow, but even to masticate ; and he was proceeding to discuss the subject of digestion, if Moussellina's ladies had not begged him in all love not to meddle with that part of the question.

The discussion was interrupted by certain indistinct sounds issuing from the animal's carcase. Moussellina screamed out in a fright, that it certainly must proceed from a little brood of sucking pasteboard crocodiles ; but, unterrified by this idea, the King of Ophir instantly ripped up the belly, and we beheld within it a table elegantly set out, brilliantly illuminated, and surrounded by a numerous company of both sexes.

I need not inform your majesty that these were no other than the knights and ladies whom the monster had at different times imprisoned in his capacious maw. You will also suppose that this discovery greatly increased our satisfaction, and with every moment did fresh sources of joy present themselves. The crocodile's jaws were considerably wider than those of Fortimbrass, and no sooner did the Danish monarch make this remark than he felt his mouth contract to its natural size : the whole combat having been effected by magical illusion, my brother's wounds existed only in idea ; and now, to complete Moussellina's felicity, the King of Ophir addressed her as follows :—

" Again, lovely Princess, am I become the arbiter of your destiny ; but I shall only use my rights to lay them at your feet. Survey this illustrious assembly ; select from it the happy object of your choice ; nor do I now despair of obtaining the object of mine. Prince Zemin's aërial expedition makes

me hope that I have found the flying cock ; the monstrous nail assures me that, in devouring the crocodile's leg, I finished the nauseous meal commenced upon Mount Atlas ; and, as I have now performed every condition imposed by the fair huntress—”

“ Except one ! ” exclaimed a shrill voice in the air ; and, on looking upwards, we beheld the Matron of Mount Atlas mounted on the beautiful cock, who in a few seconds reached the ground. “ You forget, sir knight,” she continued, “ that the possession of your mistress is attached to mine, and out of pure compassion I am now come hither to offer you my hand for the last time.”

A shudder of disgust was the King of Ophir’s answer, and he turned away, at the same time covering his face with his hands. Every one was eager to inform him that the matron and his fair huntress were one and the same person ; but the lady herself prevented us.

“ Why, the man must be crazy ! ” she resumed. “ King of Ophir, cast upon me one look more, and then, if you choose, reject me for ever ! ”

Scarcely had she ceased to speak, when, in place of the cock and the matron, we beheld a damsel of admirable beauty, leaning upon the arm of a stranger, whose dress sufficiently announced the Emperor of China. Every one expressed their satisfaction at the disenchantment of these illustrious persons ; my father embraced my brother and myself most affectionately, and Fortimbrass rewarded the King of Ophir’s services by presenting him with his daughter’s hand ; while Moussellinga declared her election of my fortunate brother. The hour growing late, the princess requested Fortimbrass to take charge of the emperor’s accommodations, and insisted on sharing her own apartment with Sepinella.

The assembly now broke up : we all retired in high spirits.

Alas ! of how short duration was our felicity ! Suddenly we were alarmed by a loud cry ; it issued from the tent, in which we had that moment left the two princesses, and, on turning round, what was our agony at perceiving it rising into the air. By the light of the moon we could distinguish the affrighted ladies, who were tearing their flowing locks and beating their ivory bosoms : the tent continued to ascend, and in a few minutes disappeared entirely.

Our joy was now converted into sorrow : the two royal brothers tore out their hair by handfuls. As for the King of Ophir, he drew his sword, and protested that he would not live another moment ; and we were too much occupied with our own feelings to prevent him from executing his threats. Luckily, a powerful arm suddenly wrested the weapon from his grasp : it was the arm of no less a personage than the admirable Caramoussal.

" Hold, King of Ophir," said he : " know that I have wilfully thrown the princesses into Feridoun's hand, and I trust that this transient evil will soon produce a lasting good. The loss of his enchanted leg has greatly diminished the power of our foe, and I can now enter the lists with him on equal terms ; nay, I can even visit the crystal island unknown to him, and in consequence can at length execute a design which I have long meditated. In the mean while, let all concerned hasten to the court of India ; there will I meet you on the first of April, and make each happy in the possession of his respective wishes. Yet, before we part, let me, in one respect at least, restore tranquillity to my royal brother of Denmark."

Thus saying, he drew from beneath his robe the well-known green velvet bag : an opening it, legs, arms, hands, and hips rolled out in promiscuous confusion. The enchanter arranged them in proper order, took out a needle and thread, stitched the disjointed limbs together, and in less than half an hour

Fortimbrass clasped once more in his arms his lovely consort. This difficult task Caramoussal performed so neatly as to convince us that his mother had quite mistaken the bent of his genius, and by making him a very indifferent musician had deprived the world of an admirable tailor.

Caramoussal then disappeared. We obeyed his orders, and have reached your court on the appointed first of April. Doubtless, the Enchanter will soon arrive, and till then inexpressible will be our impatience for the solution of all these mysteries.

Facardin of the Grotto was silent. Schahriar returned his thanks, and then inquired of the Prince of Fez—"How he liked his abode in the crocodile's stomach, and whether being eaten was not a very comical sensation ? "

"The whole of that affair," answered Zemin, "was a mere magical delusion. The crocodile was nothing more than an ingenious machine, whose springs Feridoun understood well how to manage, and whose interior served him as a place of confinement for his prisoners. In making those prisoners, his object was to gain possession of the persons of the four illustrious Facardins, on one of whom (as he had lately discovered) his own destiny in a great measure depended, and events have proved that one to be the King of Ophir. But as he had no particular enmity against them, he always was obliging enough to hurt his captives as little as possible in swallowing them, and suffered them to want for no accommodation which the crocodile's stomach could afford. For my own part, I was not a little surprised when, after rolling down the monster's throat, I found myself in a spacious hall, well-lighted, and occupied by a numerous company. Soon afterwards a splendid entertainment was served up ; two ladies (whose names I learnt to be Cadiga and Harpiana, ugly as ourang-outangs, but extremely well-bred) did the honours of the table ; and it is but doing

the cook justice to say, that I never ate a better dinner. The King of Ophir, however, made us rise in the middle of the first course, and, I believe, none of the guests were sorry to find themselves once more in open day-light."

By this time, evening was at hand : night shut in : still Caramoussal gave no signs of his approach ! The illustrious strangers now began to be extremely uneasy. The uneasiness was greatly increased, when Dinarzade, recollecting the particular month and day, clapped her hands together and declared —“ that the Enchanter had certainly sent them all the way to Delhi, for the express purpose of making April fools of them !” —This assertion gained additional credit with every succeeding minute ; gradually all became impatient, captious, and ill-tempered ; there was no abusive epithet which they did not liberally bestow on the author of this ill-timed joke, and they were on the point of giving up the business in despair, when Fortimbrass exclaimed, that his brother certainly was at hand. In fact, a large ball of fire was discernible in the air, and all hastened into the palace-garden, in order to observe it more distinctly.

It descended with rapidity, and they now beheld a throne apparently formed entirely of clustered diamonds, and supported upon the shoulders of an innumerable quantity of flying tigers, each of whom carried a carbuncle in his mouth by way of a flambeau. On the throne's summit, in a chair composed of gold and rubies, sat the victorious Caramoussal. At his feet were placed four damsels, magnificently attired, and veiled from head to foot. At the base of the throne, a monstrous one-legged giant lay extended, his hands bound with a strong cord, and his face distorted by fury into such horrible grimaces, that no sooner were Caramoussal and his companions on terra firma, than the ladies one and all requested to be relieved from so disagreeable a sight. In this request, Schahriar (who at

the first glance recognised the Giant of the Ocean, and in consequence trembled in every limb,) joined most heartily. The Enchanter complied; on his muttering a few words, the diamond wall opened, the Giant sank into it, and the throe rising again into the air, soon disappeared with its odious inmate.

Caramoussal having paid his first compliments to the assembly, begged leave to introduce his travelling companions. One of the damsels had not waited for that ceremony: on her first landing, she threw aside her veil, and hastened to embrace the Prince of Fez.

"Is it you, charming Nour?" exclaimed Zemin, in whom the sight of her improved charms rekindled his early affection; "are you then mine once more, and can you forgive my unpar-
donable inconstancy?"

"Reflect on the dangers to which my curiosity has exposed you," replied Nour, "and you will find that I too have many pardons to ask. Then let all be forgotten; let me but hold the first place in your heart, and I shall be content to hold only the fourth in beauty."

Zemin forbore to answer, on perceiving Caramoussal approach with another of the damsels, whose veil he raised.

"'Tis Moussellima!" exclaimed in one breath her lover and the King of Astracan, and they hastened to receive her.

The third stranger now advanced, and was unveiled in the same manner.

"'Tis Sapinella!" cried both Fortimbrass and the King of Ophir, and clasped her alternately to their bosoms.

Every eye was now bent on Caramoussal's fourth companion. Who could she possibly be? The Enchanter led her forward; he lifted her veil, and Facardin of the Grotto beheld with rapture the original of his beloved miniature.

"Mercy upon me!" screamed out Dinarzade: "let me die, but it's the Prince of Trebizonde!"

"No, lovely Dinarzade," said the stranger, while with a smile she extended her hand; "were I indeed a Prince, as I once seemed to be, and as you once thought me, my sentiments towards you would be very different. At present, I can only say, that what you so generously bestowed in love upon the Prince Facardin, shall be most amply returned in friendship by the *Princess Facardina!*"

Dinarzade blushed not a little at this speech, but the company were too much occupied to notice her confusion. They joined in pressing the Enchanter to unravel this mysterious business, and he gratified them without loss of time.

HISTORY OF THE ENCHANTER, CARAMOUSSAL.

I SHALL begin by informing you that besides her three sons, Mergian-Banou was the mother of a daughter, whom at an early age she gave in marriage to the Prince of Trebizonde, and having done this, she troubled her head no more about her. In truth, Zemira's beauty was no recommendation in the eyes of a mother, who had not withdrawn her own claims to admiration: but I need not describe my sister, since you behold in her daughter Facardina her living image. It was indeed, continued he, addressing his discourse to Facardin of the Grotto; it was indeed Zemira's picture, which you, Prince, found on the banks of the river, where it had just been lost by Facardina's secretary. Thus, therefore, is the oracle explained, which gave you so much alarm; and I am happy to announce, that although the original of that miniature never can be yours, you will possess in Facardina her mother's exact counterpart.

My books had informed me that the ultimate happiness of my family would in a great measure depend upon a Prince

born upon a particular day, and who should bear the singular name of Facardin. The day arrived : the Empress of China produced male twins, and the Queen of Astracan a son and a daughter. Now then I was strangely perplexed to find out which of these three boys was the Prince in question. I consulted my book in vain ; and at length, fearing to miss the right one, I desired that all three might bear the appellation of Facardin. My brother made no difficulty in obliging me ; but it seems the Queen of Astracan on her death-bed had made her husband solemnly promise that her son should be called after his maternal grandfather, and this promise neither prayers nor menaces could prevail on him to break. As it was on this boy that I founded (and that very justly) my strongest expectations, I was obliged to take advantage of a fire in the palace of Astracan to steal him away, and to commit him to the care of the wise King of Ophir, by whom (under the name of Facardin) he was brought up as his own. But it is now time that he should resume his original appellation. Receive, then, from my hands, King of Astracan, a son whose exploits have already proved him worthy of such a father ; nor need you, lovely Sapinella, hesitate any longer to look upon him as your husband. The stars, indeed, forbade your union with Facardin of Ophir ; but (though planetary laws permitted me not to reveal the secret) know, the lover who now kneels at your feet is in fact Zalmoreddin, Prince of Astracan.

Two years elapsed, when I received intelligence that my sister had lost her husband, but was hourly expected to produce an heir to the principality of Trebizonde. I hastened to consult the stars respecting this unborn infant. I found that it would be the most beautiful girl in the universe ; but that, should she ever fall into Feridoun's power, the total destruction of our family would ensue. Instantly my mother's injunction respecting the three most beautiful Princesses flashed upon my

mind ! My niece evidently would be one of them ; and it struck me that, while I kept her out of his hands, he could not possibly execute his evil designs in their whole extent. This reflection made me advise my sister to breed up her daughter as a boy ; and, the more to mislead Feridoun, I bestowed on my infant niece the same name which I had already given to her cousins. I was obeyed in every particular ; though, during her visit to the Crystal Island, Facardina was on the very brink of discovery. Nothing, indeed, but the terror of the sword which she carried with her into the bath, and with which she solemnly vowed to make the head fly from the shoulders of any one who should dare to peep at her before she had slipped on her dressing-gown, could have prevented her sex from being ascertained by the prying eyes of Crystallina's attendants.

As it happened, every thing succeeded to my wish ; Facardina's secret was unsuspected ; Feridoun, having vainly endeavoured to discover the third Princess, persuaded himself at length that the fault was in his magic lantern, and that the Princess of Serendip was in fact the person of whom he had been so long in search. This was what I had expected, and wished. No sooner was he thoroughly possessed with this belief, than I suffered him not only to get possession of Moussellina and Sapinella, but even of the third spinning-wheel. Feridoun now reckoned himself secure of victory. He immediately set his fair captives to work ; terror obliged them to obey ; and he flattered himself that he should soon be master of the wonderful cord, so long and so ardently desired. But he was not aware that every night, as soon as he retired to rest, I transported Facardina to the Crystal Island, where she occupied the place of Nour at the third wheel. An enchanted water rendered sleep unnecessary for the Princesses ; the cord spun during the Giant's sleep was regularly put into my hands at daybreak ; and when Feridoun entered

the room, he found his three captives busy at their work, and everything in perfect order.

Last night saw their magic labours completed. The important cord was of a length sufficient to reach from the summit of Mount Atlas to the surface of the sea ; and so well was I pleased at receiving the last yard, that I could not restrain a shout of joy. It alarmed Feridoun, who hastened to learn the cause, and great was his surprise, when on entering the chamber, he beheld me seated there. Snatching the unfinished rope from the hands of Nour, he suddenly threw it round me, and attempted to bind my arms ; but I burst the flimsy bond with the utmost ease, and then throwing him the real talismanic cord, no sooner did it touch him than he sank on the ground unable to resist. I then transformed the Crystal Island into a moveable throne, bound my vanquished enemy at its foot, and hastened hither with my beautiful companions.

I must just mention, that when Feridoun seized upon the empire of China, I thought it prudent to conceal my two nephews from his wrath, the one in the grotto of a Chinese mandarin, the other at the court of the King of Cappadocia. I believe I have now cleared up everything that was at all mysterious. However, should any part of these adventures still appear unintelligible, the company must ascribe it entirely to their own want of comprehension, and not to any defect in my narrative.

The joy which now prevailed through the assembly could only be equalled by that of my readers at reaching the end of this long-winded history. The four marriages were celebrated next morning ; and Facardina's secretary, as well as the worthy old Fi-fum-foam-fim, luckily arrived just in time for the ceremony. As to Dinarzade, she married Caramoussal.

So great was the happiness of these new-wedded couples, that nothing was left for them to wish, except that their situa-

tion might never alter. To prevent this, the enchanter raised a magnificent structure on the summit of Mount Atlas, where everything was to be found that could delight the senses, or interest the heart. An ever-flowing stream of that precious water, which had so long preserved to Mergian-Banou the blessings of beauty and youth, meandered through the garden; and a talisman, fixed over the principal gate, forbade the approach of Satiety. Thither Caramoussal transported the whole company (except the Sultan and his family) then assembled in Schahriar's palace: there they fixed their abode never to leave it, and there, I doubt not, they continue to reside: at least I never heard anything to the contrary.

Farewell, gentle reader, and good night; may you sleep soundly, and dream pleasantly. If you are a bachelor, make haste to get well married; if you are already a husband, waste not your wife's time and your own at night in listening to childish stories like Schahriar.

(Conclusion of Lewis's Sequel.)

The very amusing and skilful imitation of the "Arabian Nights Entertainments" commenced by the Count Hamilton, under the title of the "Four Facardins," found its competent and somewhat free translator in Mat Lewis.

The Count evidently never intended to complete the tale; but Lewis, who was quite adequate to such an effort, and regardless of Shakspeare's assertion, that "when two men ride the same horse one must sit behind," wrote his sequel, which was appended to the translation, and which commences in the present volume at p. 109.

A M. de Levis also wrote a sequel to "*Les Quatre Facardins*" as well as to "*Zeneyde*," (another tale which Hamilton also left unfinished,) and both are now, for the first time, sub-

mitted to the public in an English dress. The original text is accompanied by a preface, from which we extract the main portions, as follows :—

PREFACE OF MONS. DE LEVIS.

WHEN yielding to the reiterated persuasions of the new editor of Hamilton's works, I resolved on completing the "Four Facardins," I had an agreeable but yet confused recollection of the tale, and it was therefore necessary for me, before I undertook this light work, to read again, not only this, but all the author's works, in order that I might seek to imitate his style. This closer study of them has given rise to reflections which I feel it incumbent to publish, because it appears to me that hitherto justice has not been done to him.

(Here follows a long and clever defence of Hamilton's humour, which we omit, as not relevant to the matter in hand. M. de Levis thus continues :)

It has been asserted that Hamilton's tales were written with the intention of turning the "Thousand and One Nights" into ridicule, they having been just published, and in the highest possible favour at court; but this I do not for one moment believe. The Arabian Nights unquestionably gave rise to the "Four Facardins" and "Thornflower;" but that their author wished to undervalue a production which had for many ages formed the delight of a nation more witty than civilised, and the very incorrect version of which holds an honourable place in the libraries of every European nation, is by no means probable.

Hamilton had too much good taste not to appreciate the merit of a work in which we find all the luxuriance of the Eastern imagination, so much more fervid than our own, with the striking simplicity of the early ages. I know no person who has not read, and read again with pleasure, the "Wonderful Lamp" and the "Three Hunchbacks of Bagdad."

This, however, would not prevent Hamilton from ridiculing the infatuation of the ladies of the court, who, with their usual exaggeration, unquestionably preferred the "Thousand and One Nights" to all books past, present, and to come ; but far from vilipending this work, he has sought to imitate it ; and the close study of his tales proves, that the object of his pleasantry was not the fictions of Asia, but our own western inventions, our monstrous romances of chivalry, and the *great romances* which followed them. I might quote a hundred places where the precise expressions of "*Tiran le Blanc*" and "*Amadis de Gaul*," are given with a seriousness which makes the irony more piquant. In truth, Hamilton sought to effect amongst us what Cervantes did amongst the Spaniards, with this difference—that in Don Quixote, the shafts of ridicule are principally directed against the chimerical prowess of knights and giants ; and our author has rather sought to produce ridicule from the stilted sentiments which our romance writers attributed to their illustrious personages, and the prodigious power they assigned to the charms of their ladies. This design, however, was but a secondary object with him, his real object being to amuse others whilst he amused himself ; and I confess, that in finishing his two tales, such has been my aim likewise.

I have not been diverted from this trifling undertaking by the opinion which historic dictionaries have delivered as to the "Four Facardins," although it is too singular not to quote in this place. "This tale," say they, "is an insipid chain of stories crossing each other without any one attaining an end." How is it possible to reproach Hamilton with not having completed these tales which so cross each other, when he concludes his fragment in these words :—"But I think it best to delay the remainder of the recital which the Prince de Trebizonde delivered, until the second part of these memoirs."

As regards the charge of *insipidity*, let it suffice to say, that

La Harpe, and all persons of taste, agree in thinking this *bâtimage* as the most complete they know.

(Here follows an attack on the *Nouveau Dictionnaire*, which we defer,—as Hamilton did the sequel of his Tales,—whilst our readers may believe that our omission will not create "*histoires valdè defendus.*"—Levis thus concludes :)

Let us return to the "Facardins," which tale is a pleasant riddle in many words ; and I have assumed that which first occurred to my mind, without presuming that it was precisely that which Hamilton had in view, and regretting, in common with the vast number of amateurs in this kind of literature, that he did not complete what he commenced in so amusing a style.

After having concluded this tale, encouraged by the opinions of persons on whose judgment I place confidence, I occupied myself with "Zeneyde," which was less difficult, and of which the sequel seemed necessary to the new edition.

When Hamilton composed this little tale, his brilliant imagination was not extinguished, but it had become obscure by the dull and tiresome life he then led at St. Germain, whither he had followed King James II. of England.

MONS. DE LEVIS'S SEQUEL TO THE FOUR FACARDINS.

The Prince of Trebizonde thus continued :—

A whole fleet of gondolas, richly painted and gilded, had on board musicians who played a concert as soft and dulcet as that of the musicians of the escort was wild and discordant. Then followed a marine car of peculiar construction. It was a large shell of mother-of-pearl, drawn by four-and-twenty swans, in which was seen a nymph gracefully reposing on a couch strewn with sea-moss. Two peacocks perched on the brilliant

shell sheltered her from the scorching sunbeams with their expanded and fan-like tails, which they so adjusted to every undulation of the fairy barque, that the delicate complexion of their lovely mistress was never for an instant exposed to the meridian rays. She was the perfection of beauty, and it was difficult to say which was the more worthy of admiration, her slender and graceful figure or her charming features. All was so deliciously in unison, that envy could not detect a flaw—the only thing that astonished, but did not shock, was that her bright and flowing hair was of a sea-green hue. This nymph did the honours of the aged stream to Mousselina the Serious, who followed her on a floating island, covered with all the flowers of spring. The dolphins which drew it, and the tritons who sported around, threw up unceasing jets of water sparkling like silver, which kept the air deliciously cool, whilst a band of syrens sung an ode in her honour. I was curious to see this person, equally celebrated for her beauty and her seriousness. Both these appeared to me to exceed every idea I had formed of them, and I felt assured that it was easier to subdue the monster, than to overcome the gravity of the Princess. As I was thus reflecting, there was a sudden sound as if of distant thunder, and presently the waters of the stream, rising in a rapid flood, spread their silver all over the meadows—then a kind of humid mountain, swiftly advancing, suddenly opened, and the King of the Crocodiles appeared. He had two sharp-edged horns, which moved like the blades of a pair of scissors, and a throat so prodigious, that a moderate-sized gondola could with ease have entered it; and as to his teeth,—though I had not time to count them,—I can assure your Highness that they were long enough and strong enough to have ground a half squadron of cavalry, men and horses, to impalpable atoms. At the sight of this monster everybody ran away except the knights, who could not do so with any decency.

The monster began by swallowing a boat-load of musicians, and we heard him distinctly cracking those poor fellows, their violins, basses, double-basses, horns and other instruments. I then advanced towards the bank resolved to attack him, although the disproportion between us was as great as that between the largest elephant and the smallest lap-dog.

As I drew near to him, I observed on his muzzle something moving—what was my surprise when I beheld distinctly a spinning-wheel in full action ; but at this instant, my attention was distracted by another spectacle no less wonderful. A shaggy giant appeared in the stream in a piragua impelled by twelve black rowers, who actively using their paddles quickly reached the monster's rear ; then the giant springing on the creature's back, walking as steadily as if on terra firma, advanced towards his head in the hope of seizing on the spinning-wheel, but unsuccessfully, for the great beast feeling himself tickled suddenly turned over on his side, and throwing the giant into the water snapped off his leg just above the knee. Crystallina, who had recognised her evil-genius, and was frightened to death lest he should succeed, uttered a cry of joy when she saw him turned over, and another twice as loud when she saw his leg with the fatal toe-nail in which lay all his force go down the insatiate maw of the Crocodile King.

The Crocodile and the Genius then sinking beneath the flood, the fright gradually diminished, and every body again approached the banks of the river. The lovely Mousselina, still greatly alarmed, landed from her floating islet, and returned by land to her father's palace ; the Nymph of the Shell sunk into her humid abode, and I found myself once more alone with Crystallina, the great Facardin, the Knight of the Cock, and him of the Awl.

Sir Knight, I said to the last, when we were interrupted

you were kindly relating to me the history of the Princess Mousselina, and your designs as to her attractive charms ; but you did not explain to me how it was that you all three found yourselves in such very strange attire. I am perfectly aware, that as a warrior I am not in sooth more suitably attired than yourselves, and that it is possible I present a somewhat singular aspect in my dressing-gown, night-cap, slippers, and a drawn sword. Yet you must agree that it is still more extraordinary to see a noble knight with all the appendages of a cobbler, a trade which I must beg your pardon for saying, has nothing very elevated about it ; and moreover, the fish-kettle which your honourable companion wears on his head as a helmet, equally astonishes me.

Signor Facardin, replied the Knight of the Cock, flapping his winged stumps, an illustrious adventurer like you ought to be accustomed to prodigies, and no singularity of disguise or appearance should surprise you—when this Knight so far demeaned himself as to assume the shoeing-horn and awl, he desired to give a proof of his submission to the beauty who reigns here. The incomparable Mousselina has heard with secret annoyance the praises, no doubt exaggerated, so incessantly bestowed on the foot of the Princess Sapinella of Jutland ; she has begged that it might be understood, that if hers was not as celebrated, it was not the fault of nature, but of the shoemakers of Astracan, clumsy cobblers, who disfigured by a mishapen envelope the charming proportions of her delicate foot. She therefore has refused all the shoes lately presented to her, and as the winter approaches, the King, the most tender of crowned fathers, is in a state of most horrible disquietude, and is a prey to a thousand apprehensions lest his darling daughter should be attacked by colds, coughs, cramps, rheumatism, and the other small million of such ills. It is to acquire his good-will that the Prince of the

Carpathian Mountains, whom you now behold, has not disdained to take lessons of a shoemaker of the court, hoping soon to surpass his instructor in delicacy of taste, and his intimate knowledge of drawing ; love ennobles everything, and on his return to his own dominions, it is his decided intention to institute the noble order of the Shoeing-horn, which will become as time-honoured as many other orders, whose origin is by no means more illustrious. "As for me," said the Facardin of the fish-kettle, "I have been for the last two years over head and ears in love with the divine Princess of Astracan, whose portrait only has hitherto met my ardent gaze. I left the country of Arabia Petrea, where I had concluded several very brilliant adventures, to undertake this ; I embarked at Florispahan, a port on the Red Sea, but lost all my companions in a frightful storm, and found myself by some incomprehensible means in the submarine abode of that villainous Genius whose recent discomfiture you have just witnessed. I shall not trouble you with the particulars of what occurred to me in these deep grottoes. This lady (and he looked to Crystallina) has probably entered into some details, and if she has not, why I fear that to describe it to minutiae might somewhat embarrass her. However, not to dwell on any precise particular, having seen most of the curiosities of this watery abode, I contrived to escape by the aid of Mademoiselle Harpiana, whose complaisance I requited as I had done that of her mistress, and I bade adieu for ever to the crystal rock. On disembarking from the gilded bark I traversed Arabia and Persia, and arrived, after experiencing a thousand dangers, at the Court of the King of Astracan. There I saw that splendid Princess whose beauty has already caused so many misfortunes. When I had somewhat recovered from the first overwhelming amazement, which the thrilling glances darting from her lovely eyes cause in all who are

daring enough to gaze on her charming countenance, I tried to arm myself against their magic influence by the reflection that a person who does not speak cannot by any possibility be a woman, talking being a characteristic of the softer sex as essential as any other. But the Princess, whose penetration is marvellous, perceiving my doubts, determined to avenge herself by one of those surprising looks which subjugate all hearts. From that instant resigned to my fate, I only sought how to please the beauty who is dearer to me than my life, and how to loosen the tongue which cannot fail to say the most delicious things in the world as soon as it is set in motion. I reflected, however, that this silence might arise from some supernatural cause, and immediately I went in quest of the Great Caramoussal, the most skilled and humane of enchanters, and asked of him a recipe for at least making the Princess talk, if I should be unable to make her smile. During the three thousand years he had been a professor of necromancy he had never before been asked to make a woman speak, so that he was rather unprepared on this point, and it was necessary that he should look through, one after the other, more than three hundred successive folio volumes. When he had perused these diligently, he gave me a small golden box, no bigger than a thimble, which contained an amber case fastened with a diamond padlock, within which were some imperceptible grains filed from Solomon's Seal. I am to use this as seasoning for a pastry made of parrots' tongues, of which the Princess is to eat a mouthful fasting, every morning for a week—and then she will speak.

"The moment I was in possession of this treasure and the prescription, I set out for the Land of Parrots, where I made a terrific slaughter, preserving only the tongues of the slain for my pastry. I took, moreover, about thirty dozen of the finest, and went forthwith to Astracan, intending to intreat the Princess to

submit to the regimen prescribed by the Enchanter. But by a caprice, which unfortunately is but too common amongst beautiful women, she actually refused to undergo this simple experiment, making it understood by signs that it was not consistent with etiquette that the daughter of the King of Astracan should eat a pie which had not been made according to all the rules of culinary art, whilst her father kept fifty head cooks and seven hundred sub-pastry-makers in his royal establishment. This was but a mode of repulsing my pretensions, and of preventing me from entertaining hopes at which her pride revolted. The King, her father, who was well aware of Caramoussal's talent, and whose desire to see a termination to his daughter's long silence was immeasurably intense, urged her, but in vain—she was inflexible.

"At last, by way of removing every shadow of an excuse, I enrolled myself among the body of cooks, and in a solemn audience graciously vouchsafed to me by the King, I laid down my sword to take up this spit, exchanged my helmet for this tin kettle, swearing that I never would again resume my arms until the Princess, touched at my devotion, should yield to my wishes. This step has been differently viewed by different eyes at court; every one of the sensitive and easily excited ladies there, was literally melted at my proceeding; and that very evening I might have reaped a rich reward of tender sympathy, but the majority of the courtiers evinced that they considered my conduct as the height of folly. Some more malignant still, affected to deduce therefrom the evidence of a low and grovelling mind. They even ventured to show this by their sarcasms, and I was compelled to spit some five or six of these malevolent wags to teach the remainder a lesson. Since then I have been perfectly quiet, occupying my time in spinning with my brother adventurers, and I now invite you, Prince of Trebizonde, to share our labours and our pleasures."

I thanked the tall Facardin for his politeness, and was about to ask him the meaning of all the spindles and spinning I saw around me, and which so greatly puzzled me, when we were interrupted by a loud fanfare of trumpets and other warlike instruments. It proceeded from a troop of cavaliers, each bearing a falcon of the North on his wrist, and leading, in leashes, greyhounds fastened to each other with silver chains. In the midst of them I beheld a closed chariot, drawn by four rein-deer, harnessed abreast: two dwarfs as black as ebony, perfectly naked, with swords, who guarded the door of the vehicle; and I soon found that such precautions were not used unreasonably, for they guarded the loveliest princess that graced the earth.

"Really," at this moment exclaimed the Princess Dinarzade, interrupting the Prince of Trebizonde "we have had enough of princesses and nymphs, and in what a piteous plight you have left them all! Mousselina the Serious has no tongue, no slippers, no shift! the nymph of the steel bow is buried in her grotto! and Sapinella in the snows of Scandinavia! As to Facardin of Mount Atlas, and even the Sorrowful Ape, who had begun to interest me, God only knows when we shall hear any news of them! And yet, now, here we have fresh comers!"

"Young lady, do not be impatient," exclaimed the Sultan of the Indies, endeavouring to repress a yawn; "is it Trebizonde's fault if you have so good a memory, and require from him a chain of ideas and facts with which so many authors dispense? Prince, continue your recital, which really pleases me considerably,—the only thing that shocks me is your denuded negroes, and I must entreat of you to bestow on them some species of garment, however small. I admire decency, alike from my natural inclination and my position in the world. When a man has fifteen hundred concubines, a seraglio would

become a most shocking, disreputable place, if we were not very strict in every thing connected with morals, and that sort of thing."

"Let not the chaste imagination of your most decorous highness take the slightest alarm," responded the Prince of Trebizonde, respectfully; "the two small negroes to whom I have alluded were certainly naked, but they were deprived of all life and motion; and we are all aware that nudity has been one of the privileges accorded to statues from time immemorial. With respect to the reproach cast upon me by the fair Dinarzade, it is the more misplaced, as the princess shut up in the chariot was no other than the Infanta of Denmark, the celebrated Sapinella of Jutland. But in what a state did she present herself before us! Her lovely eyes were closed; the roses had fled from her fair cheek; the lilies alone remained; and it required a keen and attentive look to discover the scarcely-perceptible motion of her beautiful bosom—the only symptom of life she gave. At her feet, extended on a lion's skin, was a young knight, who seemed also in a trance. The chariot having stopped, I went up to it, and almost wept when I discovered, in this pitiable condition, the amiable Facardin of Mount Atlas, from whom I had been so unluckily separated by the infernal music of the royal cortege of Astracan. 'Dearest Prince,' I sobbed out, 'what can have reduced you to this deplorable condition?—no doubt, some supernatural power; for I know well your valour; and although I never heard any one but yourself speak of your exploits, yet there is in your recital such an air of candour and truth, that I believe all you have said as if I had seen it done. What can I do to aid you?' He made no reply—he was senseless! 'Awake, dear Prince!' 'Alas, Sir Knight,' said his Esquire, who followed the chariot, bedewing the earth with two torrents of tears, 'all your efforts are superfluous: the spell which binds the unhappy Facardin

in this death-like slumber is the art of that cruel old woman of Mount Atlas, who has never forgiven his refusal, and what is more frightful still, is, that he is thus recompensed for the service he has rendered to the father of the Princess before you, the great Fortimbras.' "

This singular statement excited the utmost curiosity amongst all the spectators, who formed a circle round the disconsolate Esquire, who thus continued :—

" After having vainly sought to rejoin the Prince of Trebisond, my master pursued his journey as soon as our camels had recovered from their intense fright; but everywhere he found ladies wholly insensible to his attractions of mind and person, and in no one instance did he meet with a foot the least in the world in proportion to the marvellous slipper he carried in his helmet. He went on his way, dispirited, through a large forest of palms which grew up from a rocky soil, when suddenly he heard a voice exclaim—‘ Facardin, whither art thou wending ?’ ‘ Alas ! ’ was his reply, ‘ I have abandoned myself to my evil fortune.’ ‘ Despair,’ responded the voice, ‘ is unworthy a lover of glory : thou art brave, I know, but the courage of the heart is as far beyond the courage of the sword as Mount Atlas is above the waves which spend their force at its base—return to Denmark ; hope is the leading-staff of the wise.’ ”

Here the voice ceased, and the knight was about to comply with the advice, when I ventured to suggest, that common-place phrases were by no means sage counsel ; and that we had before us no means of success in the dangerous adventure with the Princess of Jutland, whilst he had every idea that he should be hanged, and I also with him for company's sake, which was very ignoble for a knight of his quality, and far from agreeable for a poor squire like myself—for it is right you should know, Prince of Trebisond, that on arriving at the Court of Fortimbras my

master had declared his intention to shoe the Princess, in consequence of which he was admitted to an essay which had proved fatal to so many thousands of persons. The ceremony was remarkably imposing : there was a high platform raised on which the Princess was seated ; on her right was the Lord High Chancellor of the kingdom, bearing on a cushion covered with cloth of gold the crown, destined to recompense the success of the enterprise, whilst on the other side was a spectacle by no means so tempting—it was the hangman and his myrmidons, at the foot of a gallows fifty feet in height. My master approached the platform, and saluted the Princess with a grace, which if he had not been bewitched, would have gained for him the heart of every lady in the palace—it seemed as if the richness of his armour, the elegance of his figure, and his distinguished manners, had made some slight impression on the heart of the Infanta, who took a sly glance at him which bespoke deep interest, whilst she awaited with evident uneasiness the result. My master turning towards me, took from my hands the brilliant helmet in which was inclosed the precious slipper—when, oh horror ! agony ! rage ! there was in its stead only a wretched, worn-out, tattered shoe. I could not attempt to depict my consternation, the Chevalier's fury, the Princess's astonishment, and all those mingled feelings which in a moment pervaded the multitude assembled. My master would have killed me, and I was so amazed at this unexpected event that I should not have offered any resistance ; but the hangman claimed me as his due, and even raised his pretensions to the illustrious Facardin, upon whom he ordered his vile assistants to lay hands ; but he, transported with indignation, sliced off the head of the chief hangman with one stroke of his sabre ; then seizing one of the most officious of his assistants by the leg, he swung him about in such a way that he kept the mob at a respectful distance, and we then made our way through it ; and having found our horses at

the entrance of the square, we left the capital of Denmark at full gallop.

When we had attained some fifty stadia my master observing that we were not pursued, pulled up, and turning round to me exclaimed, "Scoundrel, dare you follow me after the injury which your base heart has allowed you to commit against me? If your sordid soul could allow you to sell the gems which adorned that precious slipper, why did you not also filch the casque which contained it? You would thus have spared me the confusion which overwhelmed me at the sight of the mighty Princess and the assembled multitude."

"My gracious lord," I replied, embracing his knees, "will your highness deign to cast an eye of compassion on a faithful servant who has nothing to reproach himself withal? Yes, may our divine prophet deprive me for ever of the sight of the celestial houris, if the idea ever crossed my mind of making any use of the slipper confided to my care. I confess it is impossible for me to conceive how this most afflicting change occurred, and how any robber was found sufficiently adroit to appropriate this treasure, since the helmet has never left my hands; but—"

"I will not listen," said the enraged knight, "to the lies you are inventing in the fear of my just resentment; but I will not pollute myself by shedding your ignominious blood—restore me my helmet, and remove your odious person from my sight;" and as he said these words my master snatched the casque from my hands; but as I held it somewhat tight the crest opened, and there was the slipper of the nymph of the bow untouched, unsoiled—the old shoe had disappeared. We then saw plainly that some supernatural power had mingled in the affair, and my master restored me to his friendship and confidence, whilst I felt no resentment at his anger, for appearances had been much against me—so much so, that had he killed

me in real earnest, I really think I should have forgiven him heartily.

When such events happened to us at the Court of Denmark, you may judge, Sir, if I had not good reasons for seeking to dissuade my master from again visiting the coasts of Denmark, where all the wit and valour in the world could not have presented us from receiving some new affront. "Let us rather go," I said, "to Cathay or Bactriana, where you may offer your arm to one of the two kings of those vast countries, who wage such fierce wars for such very trifling grounds of offence. They will give you a warm reception : in no time you will there acquire one or two provinces—and that kind of amusement makes time pass away ; and if you will believe me, you will in this manner put a most agreeable termination to your useless and fatiguing wanderings. Besides, all the women's eyes are so bewitched, that they can't bear the sight of you, and might perchance prefer such a clod as I am. Moreover, you can never hope to find a cock that can fly like an eagle, nor a foot that can indue your slipper, unless it be perhaps that of the Princess Sapinella. And recollect how a malicious enchanter prevented you from even making a trial. Resign, then, with a good grace your nymph with the bow, and fix yourself, after the victories you will gain, in some fine castle, where we may partake of the pleasures of the chase, fishing, and other recreations."

Such sage advice appeared to be working its effect on my master, when the same accursed voice again cried out—

"Facardin ! Facardin ! despise the pusillanimous advice so unworthy of a hero. If success did not crown your noble efforts, your virtue will find its best recompense in your own heart."

"All very fine, Mistress Voice," says I, in a desperate rage ; "but your fine maxims will not guarantee my master

or myself from being hanged if we return amongst the Danes. We escaped from them very well, it is true, thanks to their surprise and our own courage ; but if we return to brave them, they will overwhelm us by their numbers, and we must then perish."

The Knight was deaf to my prayers, obeying blindly the advice uttered by the mysterious voice, and again went on his way to Denmark. I followed him with a sorrowful countenance, auguring no good from this second journey.

During the first three hundred leagues nothing remarkable occurred ; but, as we approached the Cimbrian Chersonesus, we discovered in the corner of a wood a lady richly dressed, and covered with a thick veil which reached to the ground. She was alone, and seemed plunged in the deepest grief. As soon as she perceived us she closed her veil, which had been half opened, and entreated us to succour her.

"The laws of chivalry place you beneath my protection," replied my master, with his wonted gallantry, "and of all my duties, it is this which costs me the least to fulfil."

"Vouchsafe, my lord, then, to give me your arm, and conduct me to my castle, which is close at hand. Discourteous knights, abusing my excessive confidence, would have behaved with outrageous dishonour, if you had not arrived most opportunely, and saved my virtue and my life ; for I could never have survived such an event."

Then she rose and conducted us towards her dwelling. My master would have taken leave on the drawbridge ; but she pressed us so earnestly to enter, that there was really no refusal. The grand apartment of the castle was decked with superb tapestries of exquisite manufacture, representing persons whimsically clad, but so perfectly executed, that they resembled life ; and what was more wonderful still, was, that at the sound of an organ placed at the extremity of the apartment they

began to move, and went through complete scenes of acting. There were also other curiosities in the castle; but the mistress was the greatest curiosity of all. After supper, during which she kept her veil constantly closed, she led the knight into a small boudoir, and said to him (as he afterwards informed me)—

“ Signor, all the dangers you have hitherto undergone are as nothing in comparison with that which at this moment besets you. I must tell you that you are in the ancient habitation of the Gloutonskys, who are descended by the female side from the now almost extinct race of Ogres. I am the last offspring of that illustrious and so much calumniated family, whose only reproach was a love for human flesh, which in itself has nothing reprehensible when cruelty does not characterise it. Behold, Signor, the proofs of my noble origin.”

At these words she raised her veil, and the chevalier saw, with mingled horror and astonishment, a face which was handsome, though somewhat masculine, with such an immense mouth, that it would probably have entirely circled the head if the ears had not fortunately been there to prevent it, and it touched these so nearly that there was not room even for the smallest fraction of a whisker. Nature, who does nothing by halves, had liberally furnished this enormous cavity. Forty teeth appeared in front, whilst thirty-five were behind, and the whole was terminated by two tusks like those which formed the defences of the Erymanthian boar, and which projected several inches.

“ Madam,” said the knight to her, “ I will dispense with the production of your pedigree. I take for granted all you say, from your very appearance. But deign, I beseech you, to inform me what are the perils I have here to dread. I have already had the honour of encountering lions, bears, a hairy giant, and sundry other ferocious beasts. If, however, I must

fight again this evening, I am at your orders, although it is pretty nearly bed-time."

"I expected no less from your indomitable courage," replied the mulatto Ogress. "You will have none but men to contend with; but they are many and daring. They consist of eight noblemen of the vicinity, who for some months have aspired to my hand, as much," she continued with a coquettish air, "for the charms of my person as the vast property belonging to me. In my opinion, an affair so serious as marriage should not be lightly dealt withal; and I have thought it very incumbent, as well as prudent of me, to know them all in every particular, before I made up my mind. I have therefore, with this intent, accorded to them in turn private interviews, which have been carried on for some time without discovery, until by some fatality altogether inexplicable, the mystery has been revealed. They then all met, and their love changing to rage, they have declared to me that either I must surrender to them my castle and lands, which they propose to divide amongst them, or they would come and seize upon them with fire and slaughter. This very evening they are coming with their soldiers to attack these ramparts, which are, alas! very feeble. They are intrepid warriors—"

"They must be, Madam," interrupted the Knight, "from what you have narrated to me, but my fair friend, can I conscientiously, after what has occurred on your part, defend your honour and virtue against these gentlemen, who are all well aware—"

"My lord," hastily responded the tender Ogress, "if pity does not move you on my behalf, let gratitude plead for me. I have resolved to make you master of my person and my property, and I do not declare this upon compulsion, for if I were mistress of the first throne in the world, I should prefer you to all the men on earth." This delicate declaration was accompanied

with a very languishing look and a smile as amorous as her protruding tusks would allow. My master could well have spared so warm a confession, but replied very mildly—"I am aware, Madam, that sensibility by no means depends on the size of the mouth, and I am very grateful for your declaration in my favour, but I have engagements which it is impossible to break through, and all I can do for you (for I would not have it said that you sought my protection in vain) is, instead of attempting to defend your untenable ruin of a castle, to take you with me to the court of the great Fortimbras. He is endeavouring to find—why I know not—all over the world a mouth as wide as his own, nearly a foot long."

"That is precisely the measure of mine," responded the lady, "and I will accompany you whithersoever you please, for I am certain my passion for you will eventually triumph over your frigidity." This (as my master afterwards related to me) was what took place in the cabinet. We all departed by a private way, and soon after reached the capital of Denmark, with the visors of our helmets down, that we might not be recognised, and the lady with a thick veil closely drawn over her remarkable countenance. We sought a private audience with the king, in order to disclose to him the marvel to which he attributed so high a value. As soon as he saw the Ogress, he exclaimed—

"Ah, my cousin! so I again see you!" So saying he flung himself into her arms, and their two extensive mouths giving each other the most expansive kiss the world ever saw or heard, Fortimbras thanked my master very gratefully for having restored to him this wide-mouthed scion of his family, about whom he had long been greatly disquieted, not having heard of her for fifteen years, when she had retired into Bactriana; and thus it was that all the researches of his emissaries had been fruitless. The Princess, owing to cir-

circumstances too tedious for present detail, had been compelled to retire to Europe, and believing that the King of Denmark would not receive her at his court and own her as his relation, she would not risk his rebuff.

"The times are changed indeed!" said Fortimbras to her; "so long as the queen was alive, I never could prevail on her to receive you with the honours due to your rank: she had need of all her virtue to bear even myself; although being removed one generation more than yourself from our common stock, I have no tusks; I therefore was precluded from recalling you. After her death I was alone in the world, with my daughter Sapinella, who monopolises my affections: but I must make sure of the succession to my kingdoms, and from her I cannot hope for progeny. Incessantly occupied with the beauty of her foot, which is in truth the most charming little thing in the world, and unable to find shoes to fit her, her reason and even her health are palpably suffering, and I have hourly alarms that I shall lose her, which would be my death-blow, and I should leave my kingdom a prey to factions and disorders which would rend it in pieces. There is not one descendant of the noble race of the Fortimbras surviving, and I must then have recourse to the line of the great Ogrog, the first King of Cape North and Loupgaroutia. You are lineally descended from him, my cousin: you are entitled to my dominions, and if you have no children, why, you are still of an age to have them."

The Ogress, who was naturally grateful and tender, thanked the King, and forgetful of the strong professions of love she had recently made, was so bedazzled with the charms of a crown, that she declared amorously to the king that she never would have children if he were not their father. This well-assorted match was thus decided on.

The Princess Sapinella, incessantly occupied about her shoes,

seemed perfectly indifferent to this event. The wedding was celebrated with regal magnificence, the bride, covered from head to foot with crown jewels, in a gown of golden brocade richly worked with gems, only looked the more hideous from her splendour ; but this did not preclude the Danish poets from making odes, composing hymns, ballads, rondeaus, and poems, in which they celebrated all her charms, including the ivory of her tusks, the total, amounting according to a close calculator, to a sum of fifty-six thousand five hundred and sixty-four verses, good and bad ; moreover, each author thought his own verses admirable, and those of his competitors execrable, which was a double pleasure to themselves and none to the public, who never read their eulogistic productions.

My master, the Knight, had by no means lost sight of the object of his journey, and relying thoroughly on the voice, was anxious to recommence the trial of the slipper. He trusted that it would not disappear this time, and had even gone so far as to show it to the Princess, who had admired its shape and the beauty of the diamonds which formed the buckles. It was, however, requisite that the ceremony should be public, and there was always the dread that the fairy, or evil genius, who had substituted the worn-out shoe for the precious slipper, might play the unseasonable prank over again. In this embarrassing position my master entreated Sapinella to allow him to try on this wonderful slipper first in private. She agreed, and put it on with as much ease as if it had been made for her. Her delight, and the joy of the Knight were excessive ; but she was soon dismayed at the sudden appearance of the old hag of the mountain, who arrived astride on her spindle.

"Facardin ! " she screeched out in her discordant voice, " behold the first condition imposed on you is fulfilled ! Do you recollect what is that left you to perform, to attain the climax of your desires ? There is an indispensable preliminary

of which I must remind you, since you appear singularly oblivious on that important point. You must enjoy my favours ; and I have no hesitation in declaring, since you appear somewhat backward in doing so yourself, that I shall not offer any coy resistance."

" Wretched beldam ! " exclaimed the Knight, repulsing her with horror, " you ought rather think of your grave, than of love ! "

" My little pet," replied the hag, through her nose, " why so cruel ? Well, since you are so cold to me, so shall you be to all the world ; and you, young Miss, who seem no better, why, you shall share his fate." So saying, she touched them both with her spindle, and they sunk instantly into a swoon, from which nothing can arouse them. As soon as the King learned this affliction event, he sent to consult an oracle, one of his friends, who dwells in the caves of Boreas, two degrees from the pole ; and he replied that there was no other remedy to cure the Princess than the laugh of Mousellina the Serious. But as all the world knows she never has laughed, and probably never will laugh, poor Fortimbras believed that this was a mere mockery ; and he had already commanded that the cave of the oracle should be filled up, with ten thousand cubic feet of ice and snow, when he thought better of it, and resolved to forward his daughter and the Facardin to the Princess of Astracan, to watch for the first laugh which should proceed from her mouth. The car you have seen was constructed for this purpose, and this long journey ; and as for me, I will never quit the inanimate body of my poor master."

The faithful Esquire having thus terminated his recital, all the bystanders participated in his natural grief, and it was resolved to conduct the procession of this living funeral to the palace of the Princess Mousselina, in order to prove to her how beneficial it would be if she would at length take the trouble of laughing,

were it only to break the enchantment of those illustrious personages.

On the road, the Prince of Trebisondé entreated the Knight of the Awl to let him know why spinning-wheels played so great a part in this country.

"We are all employed," was his reply, "in replacing the three hundred and seventy-four dozen of shifts that Mousseline has lost, hoping, moreover, that our awkward appearance, which seems ridiculous enough even to ourselves, may eventually make her laugh also; and, as you are engaged in this adventure, you must spin, as we do."

This occupation did not appear to me very compatible with the profession of arms, but I had no time to complain before we reached the royal residence of Astracan. At the noise made by the procession, the Princess appeared in the balcony, and when they narrated to her the sad adventure of Facardin and Sapinella of the small foot, in spite of the natural rivalry between women who are equally lovely, she was so tender-hearted that she could not help bursting into tears, the natural consequence of the deplorable spectacle before her. This was widely different from laughing, and everybody was as miserable as possible, when an extraordinary spectacle attracted universal attention. The air was suddenly darkened, and a vast cloud overspread us, which, gradually lowering, was discovered to be an assemblage of several thousand birds of different species, preceding the flying chariot of the great Caramoussal, and forming his escort; or, rather, they were the officers of his house, for they all wore on their wings his sky-blue and saffron livery; and each had a ring, with his arms, on the right claw. His body guard were vultures: his band of music, linnets and nightingales: his clerk of the closet was a gray parrot: and his poets two swans of Mantua. He had six eagles attached to his car; and a very nimble jackdaw was his postilion. In

this equipage the worthy Enchanter reached the Court of the King of Astracan. He was not alone : a lady, somewhat advanced in years, was on his right hand. She seemed in deep affliction, and gave her hand gravely to a small personage, very richly attired, but very ill featured, as far as could be discovered, so ample was the Spanish ruff which concealed the whole of the lower part of his face, whilst his large plume of ostrich feathers covered the upper part. He wore yellow morocco boots, a vest of flame-coloured satin, a mantle of silver gauze, and a baldric, whence hung a tolerably long sword. His breast was decorated with different orders, in diamonds, with their ribands either as scarfs, or fastened to the button-hole.

This attire was very imposing, and from the distance it was impossible to recognise, under this disguise, the Sorrowful Ape, of whom mention has been made in the earlier portion of these Memoirs. Unfortunately for him, the end of his tail appeared through his smallclothes, and a wicked page, as mischievous as they all are, perceiving it, went behind him as he was making his first reverence to the Princess, and pinched it with all his might and main. The poor animal could not bear the nip, and made a horrible contortion of visage. The dress and gravity of the Ape had already inspired Mousselina with more gaiety than she had experienced in her life before. The antics and grimaces he made when his tail was pinched, and the blow he gave the page in revenge, completed the miracle, and a peal of laughter was distinctly heard from her lovely mouth.

An event so important and so propitious excited the utmost joy. The old King her father wept like a child ; all the people were delighted, and shouted with rapture ; and the musicians of the court, more noisy than ever, played so loudly as to drown every other sound : even the concert of the great Caramoussal's birds; until the latter, annoyed by all this uproar, made a signal

with his staff, and then the music ceased ; the singers remained open-mouthed, the fiddlers with their bows in the air, and the horn-players with their mouths filled with wind. The Ape profited by this silence to address the King.

"Seigneur," he said, with respectful assurance, "the oracle is accomplished. I have made your daughter laugh—your positive promise I rely on—I must espouse her."

I leave you to judge of the general indignation excited by the chimpanzee. "Send him to the menagerie," said some ; "Show him at the fair," said others ; whilst the more moderate were for dismissing him with a bag of nuts, and an interdict against his ever again appearing at court. All the noble knights who for some years had devoted themselves and their lives to this adventure shook again with rage. The tumult was at its height when, in order to appease it, the elderly lady who had accompanied Caramoussal advanced, and, raising the veil which concealed her features, said to the King of Astracan—

"Sire, and you princes and knights who hear me, I am the unhappy Dowager Princess of Trebizonde, whom misfortunes of a most uncommon nature have exiled from her dominions for the last twenty years. You may well conceive how painful is the confession I make at this moment, when I tell you that he whom you see under this repulsive form is a prince—is my son, as well as you, great Facardin, whom I recognise beneath the garb of a cock, and also the Facardin of Mount Atlas, who is at this instant recovering from his lethargy. You, Prince of Trebizonde, are my eldest son," she continued, turning towards me, "and I appeal to you for your love to your youngest brother."

"Madam," I replied, very respectfully, "if owing to some mysterious events, which I do not seek to fathom, I am really the brother of these knights, their noble manners and distinguished appearance make this alliance most honourable to me."

and I most willingly admit it; but it is impossible that this monkey can have anything in common with us."

Caramoussal interrupted me, saying, in an authoritative tone : " Young man, all nature is covered with a veil, which the most piercing eyes are unable to penetrate ; all here below is illusion and error ! How do you know that the monkey's hide does not cover one of the noblest of hearts ? Do we not see men of the most attractive appearance with feelings so debased, as to place them on a level with brutes ? And are there not lovely women to be found who are not less malicious than apes ? "

" Anything you please, Sir Caramoussal," cried the King of Astracan, purple with rage. " You speak like an oracle, as you are ; but it shall never be said that I have a chimpanzee for a son-in-law, and marmosets for grandchildren."

" Sire," replied the Enchanter, coldly, " the words of kings are sacred. You have promised your daughter to him who should make her laugh, and it is to this young Prince that the Fates have accorded this, the signal favour, which so many rivals have for so long a time solicited. Still I can imagine your chagrin, and will try if it be in my power to assuage it."

He then waved his wand thrice in the air, and after a pause there was heard a cry like the distant crowing of a cock, and very soon after the wonderful cock was seen, with his carbuncle crest and his diamond beak. He held in his left claw a grain of millet, which the Enchanter broke. This grain of millet contained a piece of spider's web, on which was written in magic characters the following mystic oracle, which Caramoussal thus read :—

ORACLE.

" If the Princess Mousselina espouses Facardin under his present form, all their children will be invested with the divine appearance characteristic of their illustrious origin. That at

her will he may assume a human shape ; but in that case, Destiny decrees that the Princess will only have a monkey for a son, and a marmoset for a daughter."

This terrible oracle, clearer than oracles usually are, was expressed in the original in very bad verse. The Princess Mousselina, the use of whose tongue had returned with her laugh, was prodigiously embarrassed ; and we may be well assured that the heart of no Princess, since the commencement of the world, was ever agitated with a more violent contention of the feelings of modesty, pride, virtue, maternity, and self-love, which usually reign therein. At length her happy genius inspired her ; she heaved a deep sigh, and after making, like a dutiful child, a reverential curtsey to the king her father, "Sire," she exclaimed, "since, in order that your royal word be kept, I must wed the youngest Facardin, I consent ; and I prefer that he should retain his present form to the horrible idea of giving you monsters for grandchildren ;" and as she spoke she presented her hand to the monkey-prince, who, affected by such tenderness, bent his knee on the ground very respectfully, and taking the Princess's hand very delicately in his paw was about to kiss it ; but before his apish snout could touch the lovely hand the marvellous cock alighted on his pate, pecked it strongly, and, flapping his wings thrice, at the third flap he flew away with the skin and tail of the monkey, and in his place we beheld a remarkably handsome young man—to the vast satisfaction of the King and the surrounding multitude. Caramousal declared that Destiny, satisfied at the generous resolution of Mousselina, had in consequence, and in her favour, entirely destroyed every spell of enchantment, and that her children would be the loveliest in the world.

Attention was then turned towards Sardinella of Jutland, who had awakened in her chariot, as had also her Facardin, in conformity with the prediction of the oracle of the Gave of Boreas.

These illustrious personages appeared somewhat embarrassed at finding themselves in such a position in the presence of such a multitude. Mousselina, who was no longer the Serious, conducted the Infanta of Denmark to her own apartment, and her father ordered restoratives to be administered to Facardin of Mount Atlas, who was in great need thereof. He had forgotten during his lethargy the nymph of the Steel Bow, whose slipper was no longer to be found. Sapinella was very charming; he was sure of the consent of her father, Fortimbras, for whom he had so fortunately procured the expansive mouth which formed his happiness. The Princess was not insensible to his love, and thus there was nothing wanting but the consent of his mother, who, finding the alliance all that could be desired, gave her free permission.

The two espousals took place with a magnificence I shall not attempt to depict, for fear I might be accused of exaggeration—a reproach I by no means deserve. My two brothers thus provided for, the tall Facardin of the Fiah-Kettle, somewhat embarrassed at appearing in this august assembly with his military-culinary costume, which was no longer of any avail, resumed his helm and sword, and set forth with the Knight of the Awl and him of the Cock, in search of new adventures. Chrystallina, whose curiosity was not yet satisfied, followed them in the attire of a page, trusting to find various opportunities of satisfying her taste. I embraced my brother tenderly, and he promised me that I should be duly informed of all that happened to him, and if it be interesting I shall request your Highness' permission to relate it to you. As for my mother, she yielded to the entreaties of her daughter-in-law, the Princess Sapinella, and accompanied her to Denmark. I wished all a happy journey, and then wended on my way to Trebizonde, in order to execute any orders with which my Lord the Sultan might please to entrust me.

"Ah!" exclaimed Dinarzade. "So then we are at length delivered from all this Facardin stuff! though, to be sure, it is not without trouble; for we have had to run over mountains and valleys, to the north and to the south, and to the east and to the west, and, nevertheless, those who have any curiosity or any taste for a complete story, yours must be very unsatisfactory. We have no information of the old woman of Mount Atlas—we know not what became of the Spindles, nor wherefore the Knight of the Cock dresses himself in so remarkable a manner—then moreover these contradictions and mysteries ——"

"Pray, madam, do hold your tongue," said the Sultan, rubbing his eyes; "if we were all so difficult of conviction, there would be no occasion to read histories, for those written now-a-days are quite as obscure, scarcely more true, and certainly less amusing than the narration we have just heard."

"That can only be," retorted Dinarzade, pettishly, "when compared with those miserable productions which your highness is pleased to approve, and if my sister, the Sultana Scheherazade, had not lost her voice, she would relate adventures infinitely superior; but at least the Prince of Trebizonde ought to explain to us how he became brother to the other three Facardins—a circumstance which, as yet, he has left unexplained."

"True—true—very true," said the Sultan of the Indies, "you ought, Prince of Trebizonde, to have asked your mother for the recital of her adventures."

"I did so, Sire," replied the eldest of the Facardins, "and I have them about me, and will, with your gracious permission, read them, if your highness will deign to listen. But I hear the crier, who is reminding all faithful Mussulmans that to-day is Friday, and, as various duties now commence, I will retire."

"Stay—stay—pray stay," said the Sultan, abruptly; "we

are not precise as clock-work here. Besides, princes have legitimate excuses, and the great duties they have to fulfil to their subjects, enable them to dispense with minute details."

Dinarzade smiled significantly—the Sultana sighed, and the Prince of Trebizonde, after thrice clearing his voice, thus commenced the history of his mother :—

**MEMOIRS OF THE DOWAGER PRINCESS OF TREBIZONDE,
MOTHER OF THE FOUR FACARDINS.**

THE few charms with which nature gifted me have been fatal to my repose. I was living tranquilly with my spouse, the Prince of Trebizonde, and one son was already the fruit of our union, when, walking one evening with my women on the verdant banks of the Black Sea, I perceived amongst the rocks a beautiful lizard, as green as an emerald. It did not attempt to escape, but on the contrary crawled towards me, whilst I contemplated it with interest, remarking that it had on its back some strange characters traced in gold. It seemed so gentle and pleasing that I was seized with a desire to take it up, but my repugnance for such reptiles was such, that I hastened away, and then I saw it disappear in the crevices of a rock.

Scarcely had I advanced a hundred paces from this spot, when I perceived on the sea-shore a small bird of a resplendent yellow plumage, with a tuft on its head and the tail of brilliant red. I observed that it was struggling violently, and on approaching found that it had incautiously put its bill into a half-opened oyster, which had closed upon it and caught it as in a trap. The poor little sufferer interested me so greatly that I took up the oyster and freed the bird. I expected, of course, that it would instantly fly away, but, instead of this, he flapped his wings and put his beautiful beak in my mouth, to thank me.

This greatly interested me, and I held out my finger, on which it immediately perched, and I conveyed it to my apartment. It was so gentle and tame, that when I placed it in a cage, I left the door open that it might, if it pleased, come out and rest on my parrot's perch. I went to bed with the Prince, my husband, as usual. Next morning he set out for the chase very early, without waking me, when suddenly I was aroused by a dazzling light in my chamber. I opened my eyes, and saw the bird on the perch, who, gradually increasing in size, became a Genie whose features were regular, but whose countenance was rather imposing than agreeable.

"Madame," he said to me, approaching towards my bed, "pardon the disguise, the result of the passion with which you have inspired me. It was I who appeared to you yesterday in the shape of a green lizard, then as a bird; for my power, great as it is, did not enable me to penetrate to your apartment without your consent: the fairy who presided over your birth protected you from such an event."

"Sir," I replied, greatly alarmed, "if my consent to your being here is necessary for your remaining, I declare that I entirely withhold it, especially at such an early hour."

"It is too late now, madam; you have established me in your chamber, and here I shall remain. Remember that your reputation can be by no means affected, as I can become a bird again as soon as you please."

"That I will never believe, unless I see it," I replied, in a mild tone.

"Well then, Princess, you shall be convinced;"—and as he spoke, his size gradually diminished; his cap, adorned with handsome red feathers, became again a tuft; his dress, of jonquil satin, changed into plumage of the same colour. The metamorphosis was complete, and he began flying round the chamber. I presented my finger to him, resolved, if I caught

him, to put him into the cage, in order that I might thus free myself from his importunities; but he guessed my intention; and, resuming his natural shape, said to me, in a tone of mockery,—

“ You wish, then, to imprison me—surely it is enough to bear your fetters as I do. I will say more to you when you are at my abode.” And so saying, he touched me with a small ivory wand he had concealed in his sleeve.

“ Become a parroquet,” he exclaimed in a loud voice, and I was transformed into a parroquet accordingly. I was so astonished at seeing myself, in my mirror, with a green plumage, a long tail, and two small round eyes fringed with red, that I allowed him to catch me very easily. He put me into the cage, opened the window, and darted away with me. I cannot precisely say how long our flight lasted, for it was made with such rapidity that I could not discover the country over which we passed; all I know is, that I was perfectly giddy with it when we reached the Genie’s dwelling, which he had fixed in the midst of an extensive orange grove. That in which he lived was much higher than the highest minarets of our mosques, and the trunk was as big in circumference as a tower; and in the lower part dwelt the sprites, and goblins, and other petty officers of his house, reserving to himself the upper parts of the tree, whose branches were formed into a suite of boudoirs very artistically arranged; festoons of flowers and garlands of fruits decorated the apartments, furnished with elegant simplicity. At the end of the sleeping-room was a *parterre*, ornamented with the rarest plants from the three quarters of the globe, and a small orchard of dwarf trees, of all the known species, and always in full bearing with the most delicious fruits. These aerial gardens terminated with a kiosk, in the shape of a nest, placed in one of the highest branches, whence there was a superb view extending beyond the forest.

When I had rested for a little while the Genie restored me to my own form, and led me to this pavilion.

"Look about you," said he; "all that you can see for fifty leagues round belongs to me; but as your sight is too weak to distinguish objects from the height at which we are, take these eye-glasses, to which I have affixed two prepared lynx-eyes."

I put on these spectacles, and saw beneath me the most fertile lands, the most luxuriant fields, ripening harvests, grazing flocks, orchards laden with fruit; I distinguished the streams which wound amongst the groves, and boats navigating a lovely river, which flowed gently on. All this landscape was animated with a population of both sexes, who were occupied in agricultural labours, and who appeared joyful and at their ease. I should have contemplated this delightful spectacle with pleasure if I could have forgotten the darling objects I had left at Trebizonde—the Prince, my husband, and my son; but they were constantly in my thoughts. I threw myself on my knees before the Genie, and said to him:—

"Sir, you are one of the most powerful and richest sovereigns in the world; you have a dwelling as singular as it is agreeable; you rule over extensive provinces, and have, at your order, beings who have each of them more power than the first monarchs of the earth; nothing is wanting to your happiness: then pity an unhappy Princess who has never offended you, and do not any longer trouble the repose of an illustrious and virtuous family."

"Your beauty, Madam," replied the Genie, "destroys the effect of your discourse; all the riches I have disclosed to you have no longer any value for me unless they are shared by you; or if you do not give me your heart in exchange for mine, I would prefer being reduced to the condition of a simple gnome, if you would become my wife;" and he accompanied these words with an oath so terrible that the whole tree shook.

This violence frightened me, and knowing I was in his power, I tried to gain time, and therefore entreated him not to speak to me of his love before the expiration of two months : he would only grant me eight days, and I then withdrew to the apartment destined for me, praying to all the powers of Heaven, and bewailing my unhappy lot. I should have remained absorbed in my grief had not the Genie insisted on my taking a walk every day. One evening, whilst I was contemplating with surprise a fountain which played with delicious freshness in this enchanting spot, I remarked a small sylph, the loveliest little creature in the world, who was taking water from it to pour on some carnations.

“Princess,” he said to me, “this spring surprises you—you know, then, that it is due to the toil and industry of my brethren. They sweep with their wings the dew that falls on the leaves and buds into reservoirs which nourish this fountain ; but I should deeply lament to see it augmented by the tears which flow from your beautiful eyes. Alas ! why is it not in my power to console you ?”

“Benevolent little creature,” I replied, deeply affected, “the only means of alleviating my grief would be by delivering me from this place, in which I have everything to fear for my honour.”

“To deliver you is impossible,” responded the sylph ; “all I can do is to consult a hermit my friend, the possessor of some extraordinary secrets, and who might serve you. I risk much in even attempting this ; and if the Genie, my master, suspected me, I should be shut up for two or three thousand years in one of the roots of this great tree. This would be a fearful penance for one who loves the open air and liberty, as I do ; but we must run some risk to succour beauty in distress, and to-morrow you shall hear from me.”

Next day I was at the fountain before him, but he was not

long after me : he told me he had seen his friend the hermit, and obtained from him a book endowed with marvellous virtues.

"Here it is," said he, "and you must never part with it." He quitted me instantly, and I returned to my apartment, and there read in the first page the words, '*Avoid opportunity.*' I turned to the next leaf, and then the same words were written, and, in fact, repeated on every page, and this marvellous book contained nothing more. I laid it on my table, and thought no more about it. However, the respite granted by the Genie soon passed—every day he became more pressing and I more unhappy ; for my duty and my inclination both revolted from him. At length my little friend the sylph informed me that his master intended from that very evening to compel me without farther delay to occupy the same apartment as himself. Scarcely had he told me this, when the Genie appeared.

He was violently excited, and instead of his usual protestations of love, made to me the most revolting proposals. I begged ; I wept ; I prayed—nothing could prevail upon him, and I was on the point of falling a victim to his violence, when, strange to say, the little book came flying towards us and interposed itself between us. The Genie tried to ravish a kiss, when the little book placed itself on his lips : scarcely had he removed it than it fell in my bosom, which he was pressing with too bold a hand ; in fact, in all directions, and whatever he attempted, there was the magic buckler, everywhere, and at every spot it opposed his endeavours, and with a success that rendered them unavailing. The Genie foamed with rage, and unable to break the force of the charm, he seized upon me, and flung me and my book over the boundary wall of the garden : from this vast height I fell, and had not the dear, obliging little sylph broken my fall, I must have been dashed to pieces. I was a long time recovering my senses, and when restored to them, I found myself on a litter, borne by four woodcutters, who con-

veyed me to a hut, where I received from an old woman, who lodged with them, all the care I required. As soon as I was somewhat recovered, I inquired the distance to Trebizonde, but these worthy people had never heard of such a city. I then asked the name of the country in which I was, and they told me I was two days' journey from Mount Atlas. As I was putting these questions there was a noise at the entrance to the hut ; it was a knight, who was passing with his squire, and asked for some refreshment, for it is prodigiously hot in this part of Africa. He was greatly astonished to see in this hovel a person of my rank. I told him my name, without, however, entering into the details of my history, and entreated him by all the objects of his affection to conduct me to Trebizonde. "It will take me," he replied, "seven months' journey to escort you so far, but I promise to conduct you thither as soon as I have terminated the business that brings me into this country. I have come hither to consult the great Caramoussal, whose reputation extends over the whole world : if he cannot restore to me the happiness of which I have been deprived, I shall die, for I cannot live after the loss I have sustained. Judge yourself," he continued, with tears in his eyes : "see the likeness of her who was my beloved wife ;" and at the same time he drew from his right pocket the portrait of so lovely a woman, that it was difficult which most to admire, the regularity of her features, or the delicacy of her physiognomy. When we had contemplated it for some time, he drew (sobbing deeply) from his left pocket a golden case, about as long as a finger. "Look," he exclaimed, "this is all that remains to me of this adorable creature ; the excess of her sensibility has reduced her to this condition ; her mind was equal to her personal attractions, and her love to me exceeded both. I adored her, and still she was not happy ; her nervous and susceptible disposition always conjured up

a thousand chimeras, which all my attentions were incapable of removing."

"' You love me,' she would say; 'at least you tell me so, and perhaps you do, and are sincere; but you are in error. You find me pretty, and it is my eyes and features that have gained me your liking—it is not my mind that you love.'

"In vain did I try to persuade her of the contrary; I could not convince her, so at last she went to the tutelary fairy, who protected her family, and by her importunities obtained from her the power of decomposing herself. The first use she made of this unfortunate power was to deprive herself of an eye.

"' Well,' she said, 'do you still love me with this deformity?'

"' Yes, indeed, and very truly,' I replied; 'more than ever.'

"Then she took off one of her ears; and at length, desirous of putting her experiment to the utmost extremity, and madly jealous of the form I idolised, she began by degrees to melt away, first half an inch, then an ell, until she wasted to the length of my finger. This, however, was but a temporary trial, for she relied on being able to resume her natural size, as well as the lost eye and ear. Unfortunately, however, she had not this power, and after various fruitless efforts she fell sick with vexation, and died, the victim of her own folly. As for me, in despair at her premature death, I embalmed her, and here she is." He then opened the *éui*, and showed me a small mummy, embalmed after the Egyptian manner. However engrossed with my own grief, I could not forbear shedding tears at the fate of this unfortunate lady. The Knight, after having kissed the cold relic, closed the case, and put the dear object of his deep regret in his pocket, uttering a heartfelt sigh. He then offered to conduct me to a nobleman of his acquaintance, who lived in a fine château at the foot of Mount Atlas, whilst he went to consult the Enchanter Caramoussal, who occupied the summit. I accepted his obliging offer, left

the honest woodcutters, promising faithfully to recompense them richly, so soon as Fortune should afford me the means.

I was extremely well received at the château. I remained there ten days, at the end of which we saw the Knight return, more depressed, if possible, than ever. He told us that the Enchanter had declared to him that he never could revivify his mummy, unless he obtained the permission of the old woman of the spinning-wheels ; that he had set out at once to solicit this, but she had asked such terms for her consent, as he was unable to accede to, however desirous he might have been to do so. When pressed for an explanation he blushed, and continued his recital thus :—

“ She required that I should reside for six months in her hut, having no bed but hers, and by way of earnest she gave me a kiss that almost suffocated me. I thought it better to rejoin my deplored wife by dying of chagrin, than to expire in the filthy caresses of this infernal and amorous old hag ; and if I had not promised the Princess of Trebizonde to escort her back to her dominions, I would instantly fling myself into the sea headlong; but I will defer this until I have fulfilled my engagement with her.” All present tried to console him, but he remained inflexible in his determination. At length we set out, and traversed the banks of the Mediterranean to the Isthmus of Suez—I must speak in the highest terms of the attention and care of the disconsolate widower during this long journey. For my part, I endeavoured to soothe his sorrows, and offered him every consolation which friendship could suggest, for I really felt a sincere regard for him. I saw with pleasure that my endeavours were not vain, and when we reached Bagdad, where we remained several days, making preparations for crossing the Great Desert, it struck me that a soft melancholy had replaced the deep sadness which had hitherto overspread his countenance. As for me, my mind was divided

between hope and despair, and I sighed for the moment when I should again find myself at Trebizonde ; but I was afraid that grief at my loss had destroyed the health of my husband, whose tenderness I so well knew. I gave myself up to this reflection, as I wandered alone on the banks of the Euphrates on the evening appointed for our departure, when the Knight came hastily towards me. He appeared troubled, and begged me to return to our abode, without giving me any reply to my questions. I could not extract from him anything but general reflections on the miseries of human life, and broken words, which were of evil omen, until, at length, unable longer to endure this painful position, I entreated him to explain all to me without reserve. I then learnt, with what agony you may imagine, that he had met a slave merchant, who had just arrived from Trebizonde, where a sad calamity had occurred since my departure. The Prince of the Bactrians had profited by the great trouble of my husband, and the state of dejection into which he had sunk, to attack his kingdoms ; he had even penetrated to the capital, and by a general assault carried the place : all the courage of the Prince of Trebizonde had been unequal to its defence, and he had died gloriously, sword in hand. The cruel conqueror had fired the palace, and my son, the youthful Prince, had perished in the flames. I fainted when I heard this intelligence ; and when at length I was restored to my senses, I gave way to the most fearful despair. The Knight, instead of abandoning me to my unhappy fate, redoubled his care and attentions, and proposed to me to go with him to the kingdom of Samarcand, where his sister, a rich and amiable widow, had large estates, and who would, he assured me, receive us with pleasure. All had now become indifferent to me, and I consented to accompany him ; and two months afterwards we reached the termination of our journey. The lady of the castle was absent, but her brother did the

honours of the enchanting abode. He neglected nothing that could amuse me, and every day there was some fresh pleasure. He was no longer engrossed with the thoughts of her who had been so long the object of his regrets. I had replaced her in his heart. Still, respecting my deep sorrows, he was some time before he made known to me his passion, and when he did so I struggled against it for a long time; but as his birth, his fortune, and his good qualities were not unworthy of me, I finally consented to give him my hand. The following year I gave birth to a son, whom I called Facardin, in memory of him whom I believed I had lost, and whose memory was always present to my mind. The Knight, my husband, was overjoyed at this event. He had given up all adventure, and would never have left me, had not his passionate ardour for the chase sometimes led him to pass whole days in the thick forests with which the country is covered. They were filled with bears, lions, tigers, and other ferocious animals, amongst which the wild boars were not the least formidable; and one of these animals threw my husband from his horse, and gave him a severe wound in the thigh with his tusks, and in this sad state the huntmen conveyed him to the castle. I sent for the most skilful surgeons in Samarcand; but when they examined the wound, they at once gave him up as incurable. The Knight heard their opinion with much firmness—begged to see me, and when I came by his bedside thus addressed me:—

“I much regret, my dear madam, that I cannot throw myself at your feet; for it is there I ought to ask your pardon, although I confess myself unworthy of it.”

“Alas!” I replied, “do not add to my grief by language such as this; the despair in which I behold you adds to your suffering; be assured, whatever may be your wrongs to me, I forgive you.”

" That is impossible," he said, in an altered voice ; " the deep remorse which rends my heart on the brink of the tomb, compels me to reveal to you the fatal secret which has lain so long and so heavily on my conscience. Listen and tremble : the tale I told you at Bagdad of the misfortunes at Trebizonde was but a vile imposition. The Prince, your husband, is living, as well as your son. Forget a wretch who deserves a thousand deaths, and who has no other excuse than the violence of the passion with which you have inspired him. Hate me, despise me ; but do not allow the child to be the victim of his father's crime."

His sobs and weakness prevented him from continuing. For me, I found myself in the strangest condition of mind it is possible to imagine. I learnt, on the one hand, of the existence of the Prince of Trebizonde and of my dear Facardin ; but I also saw dying a man to whom I was tenderly attached, and who was the father of my second son. The future was fraught with most cruel doubts for me. Ought I to return to Trebizonde to my legitimate spouse—and ought I to resume my place near him, concealing from him all that had passed; or was it not necessary to avow my fault, and submit to whatsoever he might please to order? In the midst of this perplexity the Knight died. He had placed me in a most deplorable position, and yet I shed tears to his memory. I sent my son to his aunt, and it is he whom you see here to-day, after so many memorable adventures, the husband of the Princess of Jutland. For myself I resolved to set out to Trebizonde, and throw myself at the feet of the Prince, my husband, confessing my crime. I took advantage of a caravan of a slave-merchant, who was going to Circassia, and would halt in the immediate vicinity of Trebizende.

Fate was not yet weary of persecuting me. As we crossed the deserts of Barbaria, we were attacked by a horde of

Tartars, who plundered the caravan, and who, without any respect for my rank and my misfortunes, sold me as a slave to a rich merchant of Moussul. He took me to his house, and I had much to put up with from his wife, who was jealous and ill-tempered. She could not forgive me for the predilection which her husband seemed to entertain for me, and to such a pitch did she carry her feelings, that she actually fell ill and died of vexation. My master was by no means grieved, and speedily proposed to me to occupy her place. I could not, in the degradation of my fortune, testify towards him the indignation which his offers elicited ; but as he was still more avaricious than amorous, I told him my name, and a part of my adventures, leaving him to hope that he would receive a large reward from the Prince of Trebizonde, if he would conduct me to his dominions. This declaration did not fail to produce the effect I expected from it, and he resolving to take advantage of so very fortunate a circumstance, ceased to treat me like a slave, and commenced preparations for our journey.

At this juncture the King of the Afghans, who had some dispute with the Sultan of Moussul, suddenly laid siege to his capital. The ramparts were in excellent condition, and the garrison, consisting of picked men, made a vigorous resistance ; so that, after several useless attempts to carry the place by a *coup de main*, the enemy converted the siege into a blockade, hoping to reduce the inhabitants by famine, which soon displayed all its horrors amongst the city of Moussul, who, surprised by the suddenness of the attack, had not laid in any stock of provisions. Food reached an exorbitant price ; and I still remember that one of my female acquaintance gave away two hundred fine pearls for the same number of sweet almonds. The merchant with whom I lived seeing that the siege would be protracted, and that provisions were daily rising

in value, went to an old usurer of his acquaintance who had some sacks of rice, and for a large sum of money bought one, which he conveyed to his own house, the same evening. He had had the sack for two days, and had yet not opened it, when we heard, whilst we were at supper, a noise in the room where our stores were kept. The merchant hastened thither, and arrived just in time to seize a robber who had entered by the window, and was hastening away with the sack on his head. "What, wretch!" he said to him, "do you steal from me the food I have procured with so much difficulty, and which cost me so dearly? Come with me to the Cadi—come along, and undergo the just punishment of your crime." The robber threw down the sack, and going on his knees, pleaded his extreme misery, entreating the merchant to pardon him; but he was inexorable, and was about to call to his slaves to put the culprit in chains, when he, young and powerful, seeing all hope gone, struck the merchant violently in the stomach a blow with his fist, which prostrated him, and leaped out of the window into the garden, where, finding the ladder which he had used in mounting the wall, he escaped. The slaves hastened to their master, who desired them to carry the sack into the eating-room, as he did not think it safe in the magazine until he had had bars placed at the windows. When they had obeyed his orders I again sat down to supper with the merchant; but scarcely had we done so when I heard a singular noise, which seemed to proceed from the sack. I listened attentively, and clearly distinguished a low cry. I rose hastily, untied the sack, and found in it a child, which appeared about two years of age, carefully wrapped up in cotton, proper precaution having been taken to allow it to breathe, and it did not appear to have suffered. It had a lovely face, and extended its little arms in a most endearing manner. It did not, however, affect the old merchant, who cried out brutally—

“ Kill the little animal and the rascal who brought it. What thinks he I can do for food? I have no more rice, nor money to buy it.”

“ Oh, don’t let that make you uneasy, old fellow,” exclaimed the infant; and so saying, he blew in a little coral whistle ornamented with precious stones. At the first note nothing appeared; but at the second four winged genii entered the chamber, and assumed a most respectful posture. “ You are long in coming,” said the infant in an imperious voice: “ be more attentive. I command you to bring supper.”

His servants disappeared, and in an instant reappeared with a table covered with the most exquisite viands. What immensely delighted the old merchant was, that the plates and dishes were of gold. When we had supped they cleared away, and the babe said to us benignantly—

“ When you want anything, my servants are at your command. You have only to speak. I am the son of the King of the Genii, and will tell you to-morrow why and how I came hither. But it is our bed-time, and I shall feel obliged to you if you will have a cradle got ready for me.”

“ I will do that with pleasure,” said I.

Taking him in my arms, I conveyed him to my own apartment, where we made a small bed for him close to my own. He slept directly he laid down, and I soon followed his example. I was yet in my first sleep when I was awakened by the voice of a man uttering my name. I opened my eyes, and recognised with the greatest pleasure the Prince of Trebisondé, my husband. I was about to spring out of bed and cast myself at his feet, but he prevented me.

“ My dear wife,” he said, embracing me, “ do not make any noise. I came hither with the Prince of Afghan, my friend, to besiege this city. I learnt, by circumstances now too long to detail, that you were shut up here, and discovered your house.

I left the besiegers' camp, and have come to seek you through a thousand dangers ; but, now I behold you, all is forgotten."

He added a thousand tender things. I was so agitated that I did not know how to express half the feelings that agitated me—love, astonishment, confusion, inseparable from a fault, however involuntary, all oppressed my disturbed mind. If delicacy prompted me to tell him my adventure with the Knight, embarrassment and shame prevented me. I began an incoherent address, which I interrupted by sighs ; at length, my determination taken, and summoning all my courage and firmness—

"I have," said I, "very important revelations to make to you ; deign to hear me with—"

"Another time—another time," he said, sealing my lips with a kiss ; "now the night is advancing. I must quit the city two hours before day-break, or I shall risk my own life, and that of the guards who introduced me. When we are reunited and peaceable, as I trust we soon shall be, I will listen willingly to all you have to tell me ; but let us now enjoy the un hoped-for happiness of finding each other after so long an absence."

So saying, he placed himself by my side, and nothing could exceed his loving demeanour. Next morning very early he arose, and I begged he would allow me to follow him, preferring to brave the utmost danger, instead of remaining separated from him, exposed to all the disagreeables which may beset an unprotected woman.

"If I do not return to you," he said, with an air of disdain which went to my heart, "you may still find some other knight who will take care of you."

"Alas!" I said, with tears in my eyes, "since you know my deplorable adventure, which I would, at the cost of my blood, conceal even from myself, you must also know how I was

entrapped in that fatal snare—with what art I was deceived ? Oh ! if you had seen the sad state into which the news of your death had reduced me, and the sincere regret I bestowed on your memory, you would think me rather to be pitied than blamed, and you would not add your reproaches to those that already torment my own heart."

He interrupted me, saying—"Princess, keep your excuses for a better occasion. If I were really your husband, I should know how to reply, but I am the Genie of the lofty Orange-Tree. I was resolved to avenge your disdain of me, and assuming the guise of a child, I introduced myself into your abode. You placed me yourself in your own apartment ; and, to avoid discussion, I presented myself to you as the Prince of Trebizonde ; and this time you had not the little volume to interpose between us and my success. Adieu ! in nine months you will have another son, whom you will call also Facardin, as you seem to have a fancy for the name. I will take care of his education. If you should want me, and desire to inhabit my palace, here is a talisman which will convey you thither, by holding it in your left hand."

At these words he disappeared ; and, but for the talisman I retained, I could not have believed but that all was a dream. I remained plunged in the deepest affliction.

The siege of Moussul did not advance, the inhabitants contrived to defend themselves in spite of the famine that raged, and the King of the Afghans having been slain in a sortie, his troops retreated, and plenty again reigned in the city. The merchant then thought of carrying into execution the projected journey ; but circumstances were greatly changed, and I had as much repugnance to visit Trebizonde, as I had had intense desire before the visit of the perfidious Genie. I pretended sickness, and in truth my health was far from good. The merchant, worn out by my delays, thought of sending one of

his clerks to Trebizonde to inform the Prince, requesting him at the same time to send an escort and money, that I might make the journey in a manner conformable to my rank. I perceived that the predictions of the Genie of the Orange-Tree were daily accomplishing; my pregnancy was now but too apparent, and I no longer quitted my apartment. When the fatal moment arrived, I saw an old woman enter my apartment, who, seating herself unceremoniously on my bed, said—"I have come to receive young Master Facardin; to have a Genie for a lover is so far agreeable, that it spares all the pains of labour; taste what is in this phial, and you will suffer nothing." I saw by her air of authority and her sparkling eyes that it was a fairy who spoke thus to me. I did as she desired me, and the moment I had swallowed the potion went to sleep for an hour; when I awoke the fairy presented my child to me, which she had been washing in a large golden vase filled with rose-water.* I gave it a maternal kiss, and I never saw him again but at the court of the King of Astracan, when I recognised him by the air and figure of his father, in spite of his singular costume as a military cook. The fairy carried him away after having left me a second phial, which in an instant recruited my health and strength, so that it was as impossible to perceive what had occurred as if I had always continued a virgin.

Here Dinarzade interrupted the Prince of Trebizonde. "I regret," she said, "as your mother had so little difficulty in her accouchement, that she had not twins on this occasion, as that would then have made the number of the Four Facardins; and thus her highness would at once have completed her whole family."

"Do not pay the slightest attention to what she may say,"

* Chloroform was evidently known in fairyland a considerable period before it was discovered in this sublunary sphere.—H. T. R.

said the Sultan of the Indies ; “ pray proceed with your narration : it really seems to me quite as interesting as the unmeaning tales I daily—nightly, listen to ; only be so obliging as to make your recital of such a length that it may terminate before the breakfast hour.”

“ Your highness shall be obeyed,” replied the Prince of Trebizonde. “ I have merely to add the relation of the birth of the Sorrowful Ape, my youngest brother ! But the events which have preceded are the least surprising of those narrated in my mother’s history.” To proceed :—“ It was precisely on the day after the birth of my third son, that the merchant’s clerk returned from Trebizonde, whither his master had despatched him. He was the bearer of very afflicting tidings. The Prince, my husband, had fallen the victim of a protracted illness, and his son had been sent to the court of the Sultan, his lord, in order that he might receive an education befitting his rank. The frightful calamity of the death of my husband made me as unhappy as I had been at Bagdad when the Knight gave me false information. The merchant thus deceived in his expectations, became furious against me. With no pity for my misfortunes, he took me the same day to the Bazaar and sold me to a slave-dealer : and the following day I set out with a troop of young Circassians to Samarcand, to recruit the harem of the Sultan Schahmenza. As I descended, by my mother’s side, from the princesses of the country, and my features vouched for my origin, my new master resolved to take advantage of this fact to obtain a better price for me, and he proposed that I should pass with the others as a native of Circassia. We had advanced three days on our journey, and the caravan had halted at the entrance to the desert, near a beautiful fountain. Whilst they were replenishing the water skins of the camels, and these animals, with wonderful instinct, drank deeply of the stream, knowing they would be deprived of water for many days,

I strayed away from the travellers, pondering deeply over my past misfortunes, as well as those which fortune seemed preparing for me, when suddenly a gazelle, bounding rapidly, passed me so closely, as nearly to strike me to the earth. An enormous leopard was pursuing it, and, seeing me as it passed, turned towards me, as if preferring me: I ran away with all my strength, but was nearly falling a prey to the savage brute, when a knight in full armour, fortunately for me, came up and killed the animal with a thrust of his lance. I threw myself on my knees, thanking Heaven and my preserver. He replied, without raising the vizor of his helmet, "Lovely lady, if you believe me worthy of your gratitude, the only way of proving this is to follow me." I was in a position which did not require any second entreaty, and springing up behind him in the saddle, he galloped away with me at a rapid pace. For two hours we proceeded swiftly and without resting, when we reached a forest of lofty oaks, in the midst of which was an old and well fortified castle, where the knight lived. At his approach they lowered the drawbridge, and I saw by the attention that was paid to him, that he was master there. He desired that I should be conducted to a sumptuous apartment, where he entered shortly afterwards, armed and with his vizor lowered. He begged me to relate to him how I had wandered to the lone spot where he had met me. I told him my history, with the exception of a few particulars which I thought it more discreet to conceal.

"Princess," he said to me with a sigh, "I see you are free, and that nothing prevents you from disposing of your heart. Happy is the man who gains your affections! I dare not flatter myself with such a conquest, but, at least, I will use every effort to deserve it."

From this moment he treated me with all the respect due to my birth, adding all the attentions of the most delicate love. His

conversation was witty and instructive ; and there was in his manner something refined and delicate. Yet his figure was by no means elegant ; he was small, and, as far as it was possible to judge by his armour, which he invariably wore, he was by no means well made, though his agility was remarkable. As to his features, as he never showed them, I took it for granted they were not handsome ; yet his manner was so vivacious that I had no hesitation in assuring myself that his physiognomy was agreeable. His disposition was lively, although he was subject to melancholy moods ; but what was most surprising was the facility with which he imitated all he saw and all that was done. I passed three months in the castle, without being ever *ennuyed* for a moment. The master of the house was amiable, without being exacting, and I had the delight of a library, comprising the works of our best Arab poets. In the evening I sometimes took up the lute, and accompanied myself whilst I sang the verses of a favourite song. One day, when I was singing a passage from Saadi, in which he compares life to a stream, which flows sometimes over the rough stones, at others over a silvery sand, but ending, after all, in the boundless, fathomless ocean, I was surprised to hear a soft and melodious voice, which replied to me in other verses of the poet of Schiraz ; the sense of which was, that love equalises everything—rank, age, and beauty. The singer was my host, who played on the guitar like a Castilian, although he had his gauntlets on his hands. He begged I would allow him to join me in a duet ; and, making a more open declaration than he had hitherto done, he asked me if I should have any objection to unite my fate with his ; "for," he added, "what charms me in you as much as your wit and beauty, is your modest and prudent demeanour. Of all the faults in women, I hate the most, indiscretion and curiosity. I have strong reasons for doing so," he added, with a deep sigh.

I thanked him for the good opinion he had of me, adding that whatsoever might be my imperfections, I was assuredly neither curious nor indiscreet.

"Well," he said, "if you would be content—if you could be content with what you see, and I will tell you, nothing can oppose our union. I am the last son of the King of the Bashkirs. The Leaghis, a Tartarean race, have deprived him of his dominions, but they have not penetrated to this property, which he settled upon me. If they come, I would make them repent of their temerity. You may judge, from the manner in which I pinned the leopard who would have devoured you, that I have no fear of man. This castle is mine, as well as the extensive domain around it. You know my character and my disposition. As to my face, I have overpowering reasons for not showing it before a lapse of ten years. If you will deign to accept me as a husband, you must promise not to ask me to abridge that period, nor even question me relative to this matter, which is a painful one to me, and renews the remembrance of deplorable circumstances which I would fain efface, and dare not disclose."

The qualities and accomplishments of the Prince of Bascheria had made an impression on my heart; besides, I was indebted to him for my life; and then, moreover, I had no other means of displaying my gratitude, and I therefore accepted his offer under the sole condition that he should grant protection to my son, the young Prince of Trebisond, should he require it; and this he promised to me. I, for my part, undertook never to seek to penetrate the secrets which he desired to preserve, and the union took place.

He made me magnificent marriage presents, and all the wedding ceremonies took place in the usual way; only when bed-time came I saw, with amazement, that he kept on every piece of his armour, except his sword and spurs, which he took

off before he get into bed. I made no remark at the first, but when we became a little more familiarised I begged to know of him why he continued to wear this very embarrassing and remarkably inconvenient style of night dress.

"If you will not disclose your features," I said to him, "wear a mask instead of this helmet with the visor down, and lay aside this very disagreeable cuirass; or, without taking these precautions, put out the lamp that illuminates the chamber."

The Prince of the Baskirs replied, in a tone of some severity, that I ought to abstain from such requests, which he considered as a beating about the bush in order to discover his secret; and he continued to wear his military costume as though the enemy were at his castle gates.

This was the only altercation—slight indeed—that we had during the first month of our marriage; and my husband testified so much love for me, that it was evident that, if he had not the most powerful motives in the world for refusing me, he would have been but too happy to consent to my desires. I saw, however, and with pain, that he was not perfectly happy. Every night he rose two hours before dawn, left my apartment, and only returned just before daybreak, and that then he had in his hand a handkerchief, in all probability moistened with his tears, for he heaved many and very heavy sighs. Sometimes I affected to be asleep, in order to discover something, and then I only heard him uttering incoherent phrases, which bespoke the violent chagrin to which he was a prey. I dared not ask him any questions, but I was uneasy, and my mind greatly distressed.

One evening as I was walking in a melancholy mood on the castle terrace, my favourite attendant, who appeared really attached to me, thinking to ascertain the cause of the trouble in which she saw me, said:—"Can it be possible, madam, as they say at the court, that the Prince your husband, who seems

to be so tenderly attached to you, and moreover so recently wedded, has already another amour ? It is incredible—yet they do say that he goes every night into the subterranean caverns of the donjon keep, and such visits are highly suspicious. Moreover, can it be true, as I have been assured, that a very handsome female is shut up there ? somebody told me he had seen her through the gratings."

These words made a deep impression on me. I had repressed curiosity, but I could not resist jealousy, and I resolved unhesitatingly to clear up my suspicions. The waiting-maid who had excited me supplied me with the means on the following night. I rose as soon as my spouse had left my apartment as usual, she preceding me with a dark lantern. After making many turnings and windings we reached a small cell, whence we could see what was passing at the lower part of the donjon keep. There I beheld a spectacle which filled me with horror, and has left an ineffaceable imprint on my memory. A female, still lovely, although indescribably thin, had fastened round her body a heavy iron chain ; by her side was a man, or rather a spectre, of most hideous aspect, whose pitiless looks struck me with horror. At this moment the door of the dungeon opened, and I saw the Prince of the Baskirs appear, without his sword, and his head hanging down.

" You have kept us waiting to-day," said the infernal jailer ; " if that happens again I shall have to fetch you myself."

The Prince's only reply was a heavy sigh, as he mournfully undid the fastenings of his helmet, and when he had taken it off I saw he had the head of a monkey ! I remained mute and thunderstruck with horror ! As he put off his different pieces of armour, I saw he had nothing of a man but the voice : all his body was hairy, and his slender legs were put in a kind of boots to imitate the calves of legs ; he had, too, an immense tail, longer in fact than his entire person. What a situation

for an unhappy princess who has reigned over powerful dominions, and whose beauty has been celebrated in many courts ! What an extent of humiliation and degradation ! She who had refused so many powerful princes, to find herself the bride of a monkey ! I do not know how it was I did not die on the spot, of shame and confusion. What increased my grief was, that I bore in my bosom the pledge of this monstrous love. The mischief was irreparable, and my regrets could in no wise change my wretched situation. However, I must relate the conclusion of this horrid adventure. When the prince ape had taken off his clothes, the jailer tied him to an iron ring attached to the wall opposite to the miserable female, so that he turned his back to her ; and, making her approach, he seized her with the left hand, whilst with the other he grasped the monkey's tail, and using it as a whip, he scourged her soundly on the back. The wretched creature shrieked loudly, and her cries would have affected any person but this pitiless tiger, who paused at times ; but it was only to say, " Those who presume too much on their own strength, are scarcely less culpable than they who commit premeditated faults." And he then began again with such fury that her shoulders were a mass of bruises : I do not know what was the end of this scene of horror, my strength failed me, and when I recovered my senses, I found myself in my apartment, to which I had been conveyed. I learnt that the Prince of the Baskirs was dangerously ill, and soon afterwards a letter was brought to me couched in these terms :—

" Madam, you are now aware of the secret I sought to conceal from you : you think you have grounds of complaint against me, and yet it is you who have caused your own and my misery. If you had kept your engagement and the solemn promises you made, not to seek to pluck out the heart of the mystery which my present situation rendered necessary, the term of the

enchantment under which I groaned would have arrived, I should have resumed my original form, and you would not have had to blush for your husband. Your impudent curiosity has ruined all ; I cannot humiliate myself by appearing before you, now you know the condition to which I am reduced ; and although you would receive me as a husband, it would be impossible for me to profit by such favourable feelings. I feel that the fatal blow is struck, and death is about to put an end to my misery. Farewell for ever."

The reading of this letter affected me sensibly : I felt that the Prince of the Baskirs had really grounds for reprimanding me, and that if I had had the strength to resist perfidious suggestions and my ever-fatal jealousy, I should have contrived to live peaceably, and we should have speedily attained the destined term ; I vainly tried to console myself by thinking that a thousand women in my place would all have committed the same fault ; I desired to go and beg pardon of the dying prince, but he would not allow me, without however exhibiting any anger against me ; he even left me his estates when he was dead, and when I had paid him all funeral honours, I determined to go and consult the great Caramoussaal, of whom I had heard in my travels, to demand his protection for the unbom being I dared not to call my child. Having used the utmost speed, I reached his abode in the eighth month of my pregnancy ; he consulted the book of fate, and then declared that it depended on myself to bring forth a creature, who should be neither quite a man nor quite a monkey, or to divide his life into two portions, during which he should be by turns man and monkey ; I resolved on the latter arrangement, and you have all seen under what a hideous covering the youngest of the Facardins was born ; but you do not yet know how greatly the nobleness and elevation of his mind have compensated me for the draw-back of his face and figure. From his cradle the

Love of glory was his ruling passion, and instead of jumping and skipping about, like the juvenile animals of his species, his greatest pleasure has been in reading serious books, or the conversation of highly intelligent and educated persons. He was about eighteen years of age when a Calendar, who arrived from Astracan, stopped at our castle. He expatiated with much emphasis on the wonderful beauty of Mousselina the Serious, and the recital fired the youthful imagination of my son, who, however, by no means concealed from himself the disadvantageous appearance he should present to the princess; but he desired, at all events, to satisfy his curiosity and see with his own eyes whether renown had not exaggerated her charms. I did all in my power to restrain him, even so far as refusing him an equipage suitable to his birth and condition; but he set out in spite of my vigilance, and going from forest to forest, reached Astracan, which he entered by night for fear of being seized upon. At daylight he climbed up one of the trees of the royal palace, hoping to see the princess, who was the object of his long journey, but she did not appear. He only saw the king, her father, on the terrace. My son overheard, at this moment, two archers of the guard, who were talking together at the foot of his tree, of a frightful conspiracy against the life of the good King of Astracan.

"My arrows," said one of them, "are poisoned, and I only await a favourable opportunity to let one of them fly."

The noble monkey, who was more agile than even those of his kind, lightly descended to earth, took one of the arrows from the quiver of the treacherous soldier, and leaping on the terrace, laid it at the king's feet, writing on the gravel at the same time 'poisoned arrow,' and then pointed towards the two archers, who had no idea of escaping. They were arrested, confessed their crime, and the whole court re-echoed with the praises of the sage monkey. The princess expressed a desire

to see him, and even offered him a walnut, which he accepted with respectful gratitude. He found that all they said of the princess's great beauty was (contrary to usual report) true, and then conceived a passion for her which, in all probability, will only end with his life ; but, at the moment he was in despair, and by a singular caprice of fortune, the torments he experienced, differing so totally as they did from those of the other suitors, were not the less terrible. In fact, the cruelty of their adored ones are what lovers usually dread, whilst the caresses of the infants of Astracan almost drove my son to despair. He felt that they were bestowed on a vile animal, under whose similitude he appeared, and from which it was impossible to distinguish him. Still he lost no occasion of paying his addresses to her ; and as they had assigned to him apartments with the first valet of the king, he presented himself regularly in the ante-chamber of the princess, and followed her when she went abroad, carrying her fan and gloves ; but he exhibited remarkable discretion in his conduct, always refusing the state presentations which were offered to him. It was even noticed that, when she went to bathe in the river which ran through the park, he stayed behind the first clump of trees,—a modesty which greatly amused the maids of honour ; and it even passed into a proverb —“Modest as the Great Monkey.”

It was at this epoch that the King of Astracan decided on sending to the enchanter Caramoussal, the embassy of which you have no doubt heard. It was never understood why this monarch sent three hundred monkeys in the suite of the ambassador. Politicians exhausted themselves in conjecture, in order to explain this determination, and some carried their temerity so far as to say that it was to be attributed to mere fancy ; a mode as brief as disrespectful of penetrating the resolutions of great princes, whose motives are almost always misconstrued or perverted by the vulgar. Be this as it may, the King of

Astracan being determined to send a great number of monkeys to the Enchanter of Mount Atlas, it was natural that he should choose my son as leader of the troop. He conducted himself in this delicate mission with all the wisdom and good sense which characterises him, and if he could not establish thorough discipline amongst such determined and practical marauders, his personal conduct at least deserved the most decided esteem. He was seen gravely seated on his elephant (when not occupied in writing dispatches for the Court), occupied in the study of books of morals or history. However, towards the end of the journey, the anguish he experienced at finding himself at such a distance from his beloved and beautiful mistress, who had promised to write to him, and did not keep her word, threw him into a deep melancholy, and he passed whole days in tears, which acquired for him the cognomen of the Sorrowful Ape. The satraps who were alive to his great merits, made many useless attempts to sooth his chagrin, and frequently mingled their tears with his; but their anxiety attained its utmost height when on quitting a certain forest, having called over his troop, he suddenly disappeared. My son, uneasy as to his fate, had hastened ahead of the procession in order to consult Caramoussal secretly, and the Enchanter sent him, as he usually did all, to the grotto of Mount Atlas. There extraordinary adventures befel him, for the old woman with the spinning-wheels, who was usually so free to all the world, sent him away contemptuously; whilst on the contrary, the nymph with the steel bow, who had so disdainfully repulsed the handsome Facardin, my second son, made the tenderest advances to this one. Such caprices were then common amongst the fairer sex, who seldom give way so much in this our time. It appears that this lady was fascinated not only by the wit and natural graces of my son, but by his facility in bending the bow she presented to him. He would not probably have been

insensible to her charms, had not those of Mouscillon the Serious made so deep an impression on his heart. I do not know the sacrifice by which he obtained from her the use of her bow and arrows to save the caravan which Caramoussal informed him was in great danger. He reached fortunately at the important moment when certain lions and certain tigers were about to make dire slaughter. Every arrow slew one of these terrible animals. My son faithfully returned to the nymph the bow and quiver, and then went to the Enchanter Caramoussal, entreating him to shorten, by the exercise of his art, the period of the enchantment, which prevented him from appearing under his natural form. We met at Mount Atlas, whither I had betaken myself in order to obtain information of him. We found Caramoussal very busy stitching together, with a diamond needle and invisible thread, the extensive mouth of a young man whose arm was in a sling, and who had been for some time a boarder with him.

"I am frequently compelled," he said to us, "to repair the follies of my brethren. The Prince whom you see had been transformed into a lion, by a cruel fairy, and under that form he fought with the Facardin of Mount Atlas, who cut off his paw. A clumsy botcher of a magician to whom he applied has restored him to human shape, but was unable to contract his mouth, so that he could find no one to marry him, although he is a remarkably good catch. If his arm does not soon recover, I shall send him to the mineral waters of Barege, which I hope will restore him to his original sound condition."

When Caramoussal had concluded his operation, he was kind enough to conduct us in person, on his flying car, to Astracan. You know the rest, as you have seen the marvellous termination of this adventure. However, you are probably ignorant that the worthy Enchanter directed his attention

to repairing the disaster which happened to Moussellina's shifts. If he could have got the three spindles together, nothing would have been easier; in three moments he would have spun sufficient to have made the wedding robes of all the brides in the world, and still have had enough left to complete the great ladder whose base is at the sea shore, and whose top reaches the summit of Mount Atlas! But of all complete spinning-wheels, the only one in his possession is that which the crocodile had on his snout when he fought with Crystalina's genie. At the moment, when inflated with his victory, he was off his guard, a small Triton, in the shape of a shark, sent by Caramoussal, gulped down the spinning-wheel, and conveyed it to his master; and the Enchanter made use of this to spin some thousand ells of a certain species of asbestos, which is found in Caucasus, and which is not only incombustible, like other substances of this kind, but has also the property of extinguishing anything that is on fire. With such shifts, Moussellina, who, like many other ladies, has the dangerous habit of going too close to the fire in winter, is under no dread of being caught by the flames.

I cannot conclude these memoirs without expressing my regret that this incomparable princess could not ensure the happiness of each of my four sons, who were all worthy of her by their good qualities of mind and body. May my tenderness, Prince of Trebizonde, and that of the lovely Dinarzade, be your recompense!"

When the Prince of Trebizonde had finished reading these memoirs of the Princess his mother, the Sultan of the Indies, who had been asleep for a good quarter of an hour, awoke and said:—

"All this is very credible, only I do not quite understand how the monkey's tail, which flogged the female in the cavern, could excite the laughter of Moussellina the Serious; but in all

stories I ever heard or read, there are things which I could not always clearly explain."

"For me," said Dinarzade, "I should like to know what fault this poor woman had committed, and why she had been condemned to so extraordinary a punishment. I presume that the Prince, who was the instrument, was even less guilty than she, but yet was not altogether innocent. I presume also —"

"Pray presume bye and bye," said the Sultan, ringing for his chief eunuch, in order to rise.

"If the Princess is curious," said the Prince of Trebizonde, "and your Highness would learn the details of this adventure, I can obtain them from my mother, who will send them from Demerara by an early post."

"We shall see," replied the Sultan, who was for the moment wearied of story-telling, and made a sign to the prince, who retired. As for himself, the Sultan of the Indies rose, washed himself, breakfasted, dined, supped, and the people of India blessed the benignity, glory, and sagacity of his government.

ZENEYDA.

A Tale.

To MADAME DE P * * *.

MADAME, you demand from me a long letter, with particular details of our court, and I hasten to comply ; I trust, to your satisfaction. I will not talk to you of the situation of the place—with that you are well acquainted ; but with all its magnificence, it is of all the residences in the kingdom that which is the least suited to us, for the château has so few conveniences, that there are only thirty or forty, including priests and Jesuits, who have apartments here. A chapel, two oratories in the body of the building, a parish church, and a few convents in the outskirts, these are all the places we possess for our devotion. This is not enough ; and on a summer's day one may easily pay them all a visit, together with the small vicarages appending thereto, before sunset. It is true the view is enchanting, the walks delicious, and the air so pure, that you may eat four meals a day. This is more than we want by one-half, and we should be very much better near some marshy spot, where, always enveloped in a dense fog, the edges of our senses, as well as of our appetites, might become more blunted. Do not suppose we are so vivacious here that we cannot endure it ; that is not what I wished to say, and you will very soon see that by the life we lead.

Although there are several of our ladies who could please

the most fastidious taste, and amongst this small number beauty, attraction, wit, and good sense, shine forth in all their splendour, yet it must be confessed that this does not apply to the other sex. We have scarcely amongst us men enough of any distinction to form the establishment of the Prince of Wales.* The others consist of certain minds, whom example has not rendered hypocrites, persons of a somewhat contemptuous character, but also much despised here, and better known elsewhere.

Our occupations appear serious, and our exercises very Christian, for here there is no quarter shown towards those who are not half the day, or at least affect to be, at prayers.

Common misfortune, which usually binds together those whom it persecutes, seems to have spread discord and spleen amongst us; the friendship which is outwardly expressed is frequently feigned; while the hatred and envy, which are concealed, are always sincere; and whilst they offer up a public prayer for their neighbour, they tear him quietly to pieces in private.

Tenderness of heart, which of all weaknesses is unquestionably the most excusable, passes here for the least innocent.

As to gallantry, it reigns here nearly on the same principle as in the *Amadis*; we see it burst suddenly forth in some wonderful adventure, or else people begin by marrying, and then are amorous or gallant at leisure. Does not this bring to your mind Don Kyrie-Eleyson of Montauben, or Palmeron of Oliva, and the Infanta Archidiana, whose eldest son officiated at mass on their wedding-day? But to return to our abode, where love is proscribed, and where a declaration would make everybody's hair stand on end.

* Charles Edward, eldest son of the refugee King James II., who was living—where he afterwards died—at St. Germains, near Paris.

O thou of Cythenea born !
 Whose fatal laws may none disdain,
 E'en here, behold thy power unashorn
 Where only dullness seemed to reign.
 These gloomy precincts brightest eyes illume,
 And he who for their brightness pines in vain,
 Of love untold must feel the pain,
 And with a twofold flame, consume.
 For who may ne'er to hope presume,
 But sighs encumber'd by a heavier chain.
 Than here is found, thy vast empire
 Beasts none so fair, nor with such perils fraught ;
 None who such ardour may inspire :
 None with a deeper love distraught.

If you ask in what part of Saint Germain's all this is to be found, I should not be embarrassed to point out the beauties : I should find it far more difficult to produce the lovers, yet I do know some of this species.

What a sad use we are compelled to make of what fortune offers to us in our exile, in order that we may better support it. The reflections I dwelt upon these latter days have filled my mind with the blue devils, and to dissipate them I went into the garden. There was a *fête* there, and unfortunately the bourgeoisie had taken possession of every walk with their dirty curs, ugly brats, and husbands more ugly than their wives. I moved away from this ignoble crowd, and sought refuge on the terrace. You know there is nothing in the world more superb, more spacious than this vast promenade ; yet there was not space on this day for me and my chagrin, for I first encountered a little Jesuit, a great hand at conversion, between an English grenadier and an English dragoon (both deserters by the way), who appeared to me more faithful to Calvin than to the Prince of Orange,* for the good father excited him-

■ William III.

self in vain with the fervour of his exhortations ; in vain did he endeavour to prove to them ‘in choice Italian’ that the Protestants of England were damned. I saw plainly that his persuasive powers were of none effect, and that it required some money to perfect the conversion. A little further on I saw a very worthy fellow, not destitute of wit, but I avoided him, for as well as being a great disputant on ancient and modern politics, he is always accompanied by two tall greyhounds, who, as far off as they can discern an acquaintance, dash towards him, and jump on his shoulders by way of greeting. God assoilzie the soul of Monseigneur, the late Archbishop of Paris, who occupied one-half of the terrace with his chariot and eight horses—himself occupied by * * * * * and followed by his tall and tawny Moor ! I escaped with a low reverence, which the worthy prelate did not see, so full of meditation was he for the service of the king at the assembly of the clergy. I was beginning to thank Heaven that the rest of the terrace was free, when suddenly I beheld, emerging from the forest, the most cruel and most difficult to be avoided animal I know—a widow, whose husband died of apoplexy in the king’s service, and who, with a train of black serge, sweeps from morning till night the galleries of the château, and the avenues of the garden, asking for a pension, or trying to find some one who knows somebody who is known to some lady who will confess that she is one of the favourite’s friends, to obtain her protection. I remembered the trouble I had had one day to get rid of her when she had hooked me by the button, and I had recourse to the only means left to me in this moment of urgent peril, and choosing the lowest spot, I threw myself from the terrace, and descending a narrow and precipitous path, I only turned round when I felt I was free from interruption in the midst of those delicious meadows which border the river. There it was that

I met with the most singular adventure which was ever heard of. I will tell it you, madam, but I entreat of you not to mention it to any person until I have had the honour to speak with you upon it.

It was in the loveliest season of the year, and I breathed freely, secure from impertinent intrusion; but my ill-temper had not wholly left me, and I was in a mood to cavil with everything. "What!" said I to myself, as I walked slowly beside the margin of the Seine; "it was in this spot, now so wild, that the loveliest court in the world came in bygone days to display its magnificence and gallantry! What a solitude! What ignoble objects, instead of hunting-grounds and promenades such as I have seen!" I paused here, and looking contemptuously on the stream as it flowed onward, "Who would believe," said I, "that this miserable river, which has not a mouse moving on its banks, has passed through the capital of France, and touches within four feet of the palace of the greatest monarch of the world? This is the spot where so many lovely creatures have bathed—yes, that identical spot, where that rogue of a stable-boy is swimming his jaded horses." I felt outraged at such profanation, and savage with the poor river. I changed my style, to enhance the vigour of my invective. Indignation, as you know, inspires poetry as well as love—and thus did I assail the river:—

Thou sad and solitary Seine!
More spleen provoking are thy lonely shores,
Than e'en the Terrace, on whose level plain,
Care stalks escorted by a train of bores.
Thy banks can boast no gayer scene,
Than wretched herds in patches scattered,
Attended by some village quean,
With wooden shoes and garments tattered,

Whose wild and melancholy bay
 Is answered by her grunting charges ;
 While down thy stream, in proud array,
 Float two or three old worn-out barges ;
 Where, midst the corn stor'd up in heaps,
 The mouse her little household keeps ;
 Or haply may prefer to fix
 Her quartans on a waggon-load of sticks.
 River ! whose puny diminshing flood
 The summer's parching heat so drains,
 Scarce of their element enough remains
 To keep alive thy funny brood ;
 Is it not thou whom captive we behold,
 When winter's frozen arms thy waves unfold.
 The squalid shepherd haunts thy banks alone ;
 Or the dull ass, to cool him in the stream :
 The meanest brook were a far nobler theme,
 Adieu old Stream, adieu ! decrepit crone !

After uttering this complaint, I was moving away from the banks, when suddenly the surface of the river became trebled, although there was not a breath of air to disturb it ; and after two or three rolling waves, I saw something rise from the stream, which at first alarmed me considerably ; but as soon as I was sufficiently recovered from my surprise to fix my eyes on it, astonishment and admiration succeeded to my affright—

I saw in woman's shape arise,
 Above the surface of the wave,
 The loveliest form e'er Nature gave
 To dazzle wondering mortal's eyes.
 Nought from her snowy charms to screen us,
 Down to her waist they stood confus'd ;
 And now I doubt not you have guess'd
 The nymph I've painted to be Venus.
 But of my story hear the rest :
 Her parted lips were coral red,

And shew'd not teeth but a bright row of pearls;
 Dark as the mewen were her ends,
 While Flax's brightest tints her cheek o'erspread.
 Confus'd, scarce knowing what to say,—
 " Whoe'er thou art," I cried, " O beauty rare,
 Form'd by thy charms all mortal hearts to snare,
 Excuse my ignorance I pray,
 Nor let my awkwardness distress you,
 But tell me how I should address you."
 The fair one, after coughing thrice,
 Warbled a few wild notes or two,
 To try the compass of her voice;
 Then, without any more ado,
 But in a voice so touching and delightful,
 Had any happened to be by,
 An opera-singer would have look'd quite spiteful,
 Said in E flat : " What ! don't you know me ? "
 " That you 're a Syren," answered I,
 " Your voice and figure plainly show me ;
 But what in Heaven here has brought you ? "
 " No ! " said the nymph, " I 'm goddess of the Seine ;
 And you will smile perhaps when I explain
 The reason why I now have sought you.
 The fact is, having a few words to say,
 As towards Poissy I was wending,
 I just popped in upon you, on my way."
 " Madam, you 're much too condescending ! "

But allow me to remain persuaded that you are anything but what you declare yourself to be. I well remember in the prologue of some opera to have seen the nymph of the Seine holding a conversation with the Tuilleries, and, with all deference to you, she had a very different costume. She wore a remarkably lofty head-dress, consisting of feathers and stones, with long carks reaching almost to her knees. In one hand she held a fan, in the other a handkerchief; the body of her petticoat fitted very tight, and the end of her train did not

appear on the stage until at least a quarter of an hour after herself—so magnificently was she dressed ! And here you are as naked as my hand ; not that I find any fault with that, for I dare wager that what remains concealed of you is not the handsomest portion of your figure, and that the water hides a certain length of fish's tail, which is, I assure you, not much to the taste of the individual who has the honour of addressing you. No, madam, you are neither more nor less than a Syren, and, as a proof, you can only express yourself in song.”

I saw her smile at these words, and, by an imperceptible movement, gliding along the surface of the water as if she were in a half-bath, she reached the bank on which I was sitting, and I saw quite close a bust which did not yield for beauty to that on which so many rhymes have lately been bestowed. I was about to retire respectfully, when, making me a sign to approach, and leaning towards me, she said in a low voice and with an air of mystery—

“Thou who countless books in vain hast read,
And ne'er couldst higher end achieve,
Than from some author on Parnassus bred,
A few old scraps, in thy discourse, to weave ;
Who, though in Helicon sou'd over head,
Wouldst fail the meanest laurel to receive ;
Thou whom all spirits fill with dread,
Yet fearing still wilt not believe ;
Who with contempt to look on me art led,
As some show-monster trick'd up to deceive ;
Thou to whose heart love's shaft is newly sped—”

“Queen of a stream, whose beauties leave
Fair Loire behind—you 've hit the mark,” I said ;
“But who could all this knowledge give ?”

These banks,” replied the nymph, “are daily haunted
By those who under some pretence
Might interrupt our conference ;

And 'tis to you alone the favour's granted
With demigods of having audience.
Beneath the wave whence you beheld me rise,
With crystal arches vaulted o'er,
A grotto deeply buried lies,
Where in profusion pearls and coral red
Its liquid portals overspread,
Where boundless art and riches wed—
But follow me—and let me charm your eyes."

"I am quite ready to believe," I replied, somewhat surprised at this proposal, "that you are lodged most magnificently down below; but, besides that I am not fond of a plunge in the water, and should not live long with my head under the stream, as I have occasionally had a dip in your watery bosom—if your goddess-ship had paid the slightest attention to me on these occasions, you would have perceived how unfit I am for anything when I am wet."

"Well," she said, evidently annoyed at my refusal, "as it is not for anything that concerns you that I have appeared, I must, in spite of your incredulity or weakness, have some consideration for one or the other, and accommodate myself to your caprices. What I have to say to you, however, must be without witnesses. In the middle of this field there is a kind of rustic grotto, invisible to mortal eyes—and which is indeed but a mean hovel to what I offered to show to you. I often retire thither in the very sultry weather, when, as it has pleased you to say, I have nothing left even for my fish to drink. Will you not grant me a private audience?"

At these words she flung a drop or two of water on my eyes with her middle finger, and seeing that I shuddered:

"Do not be afraid," she said, "of any metamorphosis; it is only a slight ceremony, without which you would not see the place we are going to!"

As she spoke, she came quite out of the water ; she had nothing on but a petticoat of the slightest possible material—a mere transparent gauze—and the moisture made it cling so closely around her, that she might as well have been without it. I saw quite distinctly the whole form of her body ; but although it was perfection itself in shape and grace, the only feeling it inspired me with was admiration. I said to myself,—

These deities afford, I thought,
An unsubstantial kind of pastime ;
Like *maguerewas*, a bird much sought
By dainty Catholics in fast time.
And even the most straightly laced
Might gaze on nakedness so chaste :
Whiter than snow appears the charmer,
Whiter than snow and no whit warmer ;
And all her charms, instead of pleasing,
Leave me as cold as any fish :
Her very blood, I trow, is freezing ;
She is indeed a lenten dish.

Whilst this idea ran through my mind, I thought I was transported by some enchantment to a palace, the most magnificent and agreeable in the world. Novelty and good taste were displayed in its architecture, as well as in the fountains and garden in the midst of which it was situated.

“ What ! ” said I, “ have we come three leagues already—have we reached Trianon in an instant ? ”

She did not condescend to reply to me; but, as if she had pity on the meanness of the thought, she shrugged her ivory shoulders, and, smiling disdainfully, beckoned me to enter into a closet, decorated with all that antiquity and modern time have produced that is most rare and attractive, and, placing herself in an attitude of repose on a splendid sofa, compelled me, notwithstanding a show of some repugnance, to take a seat

close to her ; and, after looking at me very fixedly for some time, she thus commenced :—

HISTORY OF ZENEYDA.

“ It is by no means chance which has induced me to address you, still less is it in the hopes of finding in your mind that easy credulity which can be made to swallow anything. I rather suspect you of leaning to the other extreme ; but as I know you have not so malicious a disposition as is generally attributed to you, and have sufficient memory to forget nothing that is important in my recital, I will only request your attention, provided that you make such use as I desire of a history which is not a mere invention, nor related merely to amuse you. The adventures are of very ancient date, it is true, and may seem to you purely imaginary ; but whether you believe them or not, is not of the slightest consequence, provided you recollect them. You know well enough when to hold your tongue, or rather, you are not naturally loquacious, and this is what I require ; for in what I have to relate to you there are some things to excite your curiosity, and others which will seem opposed to probability. Allow me to put you on your guard against one or other, and to impose on you from this moment unbroken silence, for you are no longer allowed to mix your conversation with mine ; and the least word you say to interrupt me, I shall vanish from before your eyes. I shall therefore anticipate your wishes by commencing with some reference to myself.

“ I am not what I appear to you ; I have not always been what I now seem to be, but I shall endure to the very end of the world. You have already witnessed some of the effects of my power, which, although it is limited, is yet more extensive than that of mortals. Hear me without dread. What you

have heard that passes for fabulous amongst you, as regards the Cabalists, is neither entirely true, nor altogether imaginary; for it is proved that, in the expanse of the air, in the bosom of the earth, and the depth of the waters, there are certain intelligences which partake of human nature, principally in their constancy to malignity; and these invisible beings, instead of regulating the elements in which they dwell, frequently cause the disorders which are remarked therein; for earthquakes, floods, storms, whirlwinds, and other outbreaks of nature, are caused by their caprices, and not by those natural causes which your philosophers have only mystified in their attempts to explain. Nevertheless, it is not without the consent of a superior, limitless, eternal, and incomprehensible power, that they dispose of the destiny of things below; but it would be only in the first instance to distract your attention were I to expatiate more upon this point; yet I have alluded to it thus briefly, purposely before I commence my history.

"I have been for some time past amongst the number of these genii; but, O Heaven! how fatal to me was the adventure which conferred on me this species of immortality, and how many a pang of sorrow does it cost me each time the cruel remembrance occurs to my mind!"

At these words, raising her eyes to Heaven, she heaved many sighs; and, in spite of all her efforts to restrain them, I saw tears flow down her lovely cheeks, and fall on her snowy bosom so unaffectedly, amidst the most touching silence, that I really was as nigh as possible keeping her company. She soon recovered; and, having proved to me by a tender look that she was not insensible to my sympathy—

"Reserve," she said, "this kind display of feeling for the conclusion of my narrative. You will find in it enough to exercise all your pity; and yet I pray of you to receive the unreserved communication I am about to make to you as to

who I am, as you ought: deserve it by your discretion. Whether you believe what you will soon hear, or may take me and my history for illusions, remember that you will not do well to abuse a confidence you will find so advantageous to yourself."

On these words, after having looked at me for some time with great stedfastness, she drew nearer to me, and, pulling one of the longest curls of my periuke towards her, in order the more closely to whisper in my ear, I was compelled, in spite of my extreme respect, to lean upon her in a very familiar manner. Her cheek touched mine, and seemed to me to glow with a lively animation wholly different from that insensibility I had accused her of communicating to me when she left the water. Her breath was pure and fresh; and this divinity, whom I had suspected of being rather marshy, did not smell of the swamp the least in the world. Why am I not allowed to reveal all she said to me in a secret conference which I could have wished longer? But at last she appeared to grow weary, and let go her hold of my periuke.

"I should feel too much constraint," she said, "were I thus to continue my narrative. Let every body quit the apartment, and leave us alone!"

I turned round, and seeing no one in the room, believed the order was addressed to me, and rising immediately—

"Sir," she said, "do not stir. I was speaking to certain of my waiting-women who were chattering in that flower-vase yonder on the mantel-piece. I am not waited on by fairies," she added, observing that I smiled; "those three flies who are now on the window-pane are the maidens of whom I spoke. You will see them by and by under a more agreeable figure."

The maids of honour then flew away, and their mistress thus continued her recital:—

"I have not the power of actually reading hearts, but I know

nearly all thoughts by the sudden or violent movements which joy, terror, hatred, or love excite. A certain number of genii, subject to my will, inform me of all that occurs throughout a wide district; but my empire has its limits. I make these subordinate sprites take any shape I choose, and through their ministry I know, for instance, all that passes at your court, and the life, character, and disposition of those who compose it!"

"An agreeable budget!" said I to myself, "and how—"

"Silence!" she exclaimed, "and listen to me. It is usually in the shape of flies that my emissaries make their observations;—they are quicker about their work, and excite less attention; therefore you may be assured that those very troublesome flies who come back the more obstinately when they are driven away, are nothing more than spies of this kind. But my rule does not endure all the year round; for as soon as the swallows disappear, I am, as it were, quite annihilated, and I do not know what becomes of me until their return; then, without any consciousness on my part, I find myself just as I was before. This is a slight sketch of what I am. I must now inform you what I was. Remember, I again warn you, whilst you are listening to a recital which is long and full of extraordinary events, that you must not on any account interrupt it. It is twelve years since I arrived at the court of——"

At these words, placing her finger on her mouth at the moment I was about to interrupt her—

"Beware!" she exclaimed: "this is the last time I will give you any warning. I was," she continued, "about twenty years of age when the ambassador of Childeric conducted me to Troyes, then the capital of the new dynasty of the French; but in order that you may clearly understand all concerning my adventures, I must give you an abridgment of all that occurred from the foundation of that monarchy until the present period. You know that Pharamond was the first King

of France, or rather you credit history, which says as much : his real name, however, was Mellambaudis ; and if your idea of him be conformable to what romances have related to you, or even more serious writers, you will find a good deal to unlearn in reference to his adventures, his character, and appearance.

" Mellambaudis, whom I will however call Pharamond, in order that your ears may not be shocked at his barbarous name, was the lord of Petite-Pierre, a wild place existing at that period, and inhabited by brigands, who robbed with impunity all they found weaker than themselves. Pharamond, at their head, profiting by the disorders and revolution that threatened the Roman empire, formed designs very much beyond his strength, although not beyond his ambition. The hope of booty, and the pleasures of a free life, had so increased his followers, that he quitted his mountains, rushed down upon Alsatia like a torrent, and having ravaged that country, crossed the Rhine, penetrating far into Franconia. He there found a certain Ascarinus, who, following the same course as himself, could not bear any 'rival near the throne,' that is, with the idea of establishing himself in those cantons. He drove Pharamond back across the Rhine, who after having vainly tried to seize on the banks of the river on this side, eventually established himself in the country between Lorraine, Franche-Comté, and Champagne, of which he made a facile conquest. Gondioche, the most powerful of all the heads of these cantons, was occupied in strengthening his position in Burgundy, which he had wrested from the Romans ; and so far from opposing himself to the settling of Pharamond, he preferred him as a neighbour to such enemies. He soon repented of the assistance he had given him. Stilico, the absolute ruler of the western empire, in consequence of the weakness of Honorius, beginning to be alarmed at the insurrections he had himself caused in

order to render himself necessary, sent fresh legions into Gaul to quell the murmurs which his conduct had excited. Curio, who commanded them, attacked Gondioche, as yet but insecurely established in his new dominions, and pressed him so severely that he was forced to shut himself up in the capital of the Burgundians, whilst Pharamond, whose assistance he had vainly implored, in his turn, did not give himself the slightest trouble to come to his rescue. He sent to reproach him with his ingratitude for the last time, and now sought only to defend to the last something in his eyes more precious than his kingdom, or even his life, which was at that moment in keeping within the ramparts of Dijon. Pharamond, who had given the Romans time to expend their forces in accomplishing the ruin of his neighbour, feared that they might turn their arms against him with similar success, if he allowed them entirely to subdue him. Leaving to his son Clodio the following up of those conquests he had commenced on the borders of Champagne, he collected all his powers, advanced against the Romans by forced marches, surprised them, and having seized on their camp, their surprise was so complete, and the result so bloody, that the only prisoner they made was the unfortunate Curio.

"The victor, laden with the spoils of the Romans, entered triumphantly into the city he had just delivered, surrounded by eagles and the fasces, and dragging at his heels the Roman general laden with fetters. The suddenness of so great a victory had prevented Gondioche from participating in its results : he had but just the time to receive the conqueror at the gates of the city. Until that moment the praises and flatteries of the people he had just delivered had been the only things that occupied his mind ; but, on reaching the palace of Gondioche, he saw the lovely Rosamond, and became enamoured of her. This was the invariable effect produced by a beauty whose

memory is still preserved by posterity. You will see presently how far in other respects that memory is worthy of such immortality. Pharamond addressed her, flushed with the recent glory acquired by the defeat and shame of the Romans. What a spectacle for a mind prejudiced with a mortal hatred against them!

“ Rosamond was not insensible to its effects : he appeared in her eyes a hero, a deity, or at least the most enchanting of mortal men. He was small, but stout, high-shouldered, and of short stature, with long arms ; his countenance was no better than his figure, with the exception of a mixture of the ferocious and the dignified in its expression difficult to define. As to his attire, he wore a turban decked with three cock’s feathers ; a cloak of green cloth, descending only to the waist, covered by a leather jerkin of the same length ; to this cloak was attached a hood of violet velvet hanging between ; and he also had small chamois leather boots, which only came half way up his leg.

“ Ah ! ” said I to myself, “ little Mellaubaudis was very elegantly attired, and had a most engaging aspect to excite love ; and Fair Rosamond could not have been—”

“ Fair Rosamond,” continued the nymph, (as if I myself had spoken,) “ was charmed with him, in spite of the ridiculous impression you may receive from the real portrait I have just drawn ; and the mind of Pharamond, very susceptible, despite his ferocity, could not see such a perfection of charms without becoming deeply enamoured. Gondioche expected as much, but had not anticipated that the person of Pharamond would have a similar effect on her ; and his breast heaved with grief and jealousy, whilst a desire of vengeance rekindled all the detestation and animosity which Rosamond experienced against the Romans. She gave full scope to these sentiments, and said, (whilst she gave to her eyes their utmost expression, and turned them full upon Pharamond,) —

" ' King of the French, crown all that Rosamond now owes you in return for liberty and life by a gift which will be no less agreeable than either. I beg the Roman general of you. Make me the arbitress of his destiny.'

" Pharamond, who had himself just surrendered, could hardly refuse to deliver over his prisoner. The unhappy Roman was brought in ; but Gondioche could not see him in his fедерн condition without ordering his chains to be taken off.

" ' Stay, Gondioche ! ' exclaimed the haughty Rosamond. ' You have had too small a share in the misfortunes of him who placed you in the position whence you seek to extricate him, to have any right to render him so generous a service. Let him be shut up,' she continued, ' in the dungeons until the nature of his punishment shall be decided on.'

" The unhappy Curio did not belie his race, but sustained his disgrace and sentence with a firmness worthy of ancient Rome, not deigning even to cast a glance on her who gave this cruel mandate.

" Tournaments and banquets, which Pharamond loved to excess, were the evidences of the gratitude of Gondioche ; but he gave them with repugnance to a man he was beginning to detest ; for Rosamond gave him more cherished proofs of her gratitude, and was at no pains to conceal her feelings. Pharamond, master at the court of Gondioche, paid no attention to his presence ; and, unable to endure this, he withdrew under pretence of calling his troops together.

" Still these two lovers, so different in appearance, but so alike in their inclinations, frequently preferred barbarous sports to the gentle dalliance of a new-born flame. The luxury of the Romans, who brought with their armies all that could serve for pomp and show, had supplied them with gladiators : they contemplated these bloody combats with delight ; and Rosamond would never have been satisfied had not Pharamond been informed

that they had also found lions and tigers in the camp of Curio. It would have seemed as though the mention of these savage beasts had aroused all the cruelty of this inhuman female. She seemed delighted, and raising her eyes to heaven, exclaimed:—

“ ‘ Ye just gods, accept my thanks for the means you offer me of avenging the death of these so dear to me. Deliberation is no longer needful ; and happy indeed shall I be, if with Curio I could immolate every Roman to the mames which I hope to appease by this sacrifice ! I swear they should perish like him, and know no burial but in the entrails of wild beasts. Let him know,’ she added, ‘ that in three days he shall be exposed to the lions, and that I only thus delay his death that he may the longer feel all the horror of the punishment that awaits him.’ ”

“ What diabolical fiend,” said I to myself, “ could have possessed this fury ! ”

“ I won’t tell you,” continued the lovely Naiad, with a smile, “ for yet see I can guess pretty accurately what people are thinking of in my presence ; but I must, for the moment, leave the thread of my story to account, as far as possible, for the cruelty of Rosamond.

“ She was Até’s daughter, who had given her in marriage to Radagnise. These two men of power and importance in that part of Gaul which runs along the banks of the Moselle, had roused it against the Romans, and being in communication with Trèves, had called upon Gondieche to join them, and surprise the city. The son of Stilico was then governor of those provinces, with his seat of rule at Trèves, and was quite ready to carry out his father’s design of exciting troubles in this portion of the empire. He was cruel and voluptuous, qualities which seldom failed to disgust people with the Roman yoke. Yet as his cruelty and violence kept him on the alert, and made him distrustful, he had his spies planted everywhere. He was soon informed of all that was going on in the city, and having

extracted, by the application of torture, a revelation of the whole conspiracy, he prepared everything for the reception of Até and Radagaise. Deceived by signals, they eagerly took possession of a gate which was opened to them, and, entering first, they fell into the hands of their enemy. They were seized, and half their troops having entered, the gates were shut upon them, and all being slaughtered, except the two chieftains and a few others, they rushed out on the rest of the army, who were also slain, except a few who escaped, owing to night coming on, or the inability of the murderers to pursue them, from fatigue at their massacre. Yet the cruelties to which the prisoners soon saw themselves exposed, gave them cause to envy those whom the first fury of arms had not spared. They presented them for several days as a show in the arena before the Roman soldiery, where they were given up as a prey to wild animals, or perished in combats as gladiators against one another. Yet although the son of Stilico doomed daily certain of these miserable victims to horrid deaths, he spared Até and Radagaise, that they might return to Rome, and give brilliant testimony of his victory. Rosamond, at the first news of this defeat, had felt the deepest grief and despair ; she was so affected that she did not fear putting herself into the power of the most violent of these men, in order to attempt to prevail on him to spare them. The treatment evinced towards the defeated made her fear everything for those who were authors of the revolt. She had just married Radagaise, and was violently attached to him, but her love for her father was still more excessive. The moment she appeared before the son of Stilico, to see, love, and determine to possess her, became an immediate and engrossing idea ; he raised her up from his feet, where she had thrown herself, and having bestowed some moments in admiring her beauty, and that certain respect which the sex conveys when it possesses this rare advantage, he soon informed her the price at which

she might hope for the lives of those for whom she had interceded. At this insult the haughty Rosamond felt all her detestation increase, and she hated the Roman name still more bitterly, if that indeed were possible ; and, forgetful of the peril of those she adored, she gave way to the first promptings of her indignation, replying to the Roman only by every mark of the most fierce contempt, which served only to rouse his anger and augment his desires. He gave her the remainder of the day to determine, and declared that the least repugnance she might evince, on the following day, to his passion, should be the sentence of her husband and father, whilst she was at liberty to consult them both on a resolution which was by no means indifferent to them.

“ I should be compelled to extend my narrative too much were I to particularise all that passed, and all the outpourings of grief and affection which took place at this sad interview. The fatal term awarded to Rosamond had nearly expired, and her only resolution had been to die with those she so fondly loved ; an extremity less hard than that of living and being separated from them for ever. The messenger who came to learn Rosamond’s last decision heard nothing but imprecations against his master. At this reply the minister to the governor’s will ordered the prisoners to be stripped, beaten with rods, and then conveyed to the arena and cast to the wild beasts. The promptitude with which he was obeyed gave no time to the wretched Rosamond to consider ; she was seized by soldiers, that she might be compelled to witness the punishment of the two persons she loved dearer than her life. Judge of her feelings when she saw her father and husband stripped, and on the point of submitting to an ignominious death. She could not endure the sight, and as the executioners were about to raise their hands to them, she cried out—‘ Stop, lead me to the tyrant ! ’ At these words, without thinking of anything but the frightful spectacle of a punish-

iment whose very thought made her tremble, she threw herself into the arms of the son of Stilice, hardly knowing what she did, or rather not thinking anything infamous or horrible, but the state in which she had seen all that was dearest to her on earth. But whilst she took a part so odious in order to save them, the Roman, giving way to the transports of a success so wholly unlooked for, neglected to suspend his first sentence, and the ministers of his orders too anxious to execute them, did not learn that the unfortunate Rosamond had obtained the pardon of her father and husband. They were both rent in pieces by wild beasts, after having undergone all the infamy of the first punishment. She had not the time to contemplate the miserable and horrible condition to which she was reduced on hearing these facts.

"The Roman garrison had gone out to see the bloody spectacle in the arena, and during that time the city, rising, massacred all the Romans who remained, and the governor himself only escaped by hasty flight. Gendioche appeared at this moment, and finding the Roman cohorts endeavouring to force the gates of the city, he fell upon them, cut them in pieces, and entering the city, gave it up to the plunder of his troops; of all the booty only reserving to himself the least valuable portion. He married the outraged Rosamond, and took her to his own dominions. This was the cause of her resentment, to which she resolved to immolate the unfortunate Curio, as she had sworn. Pharamond not only consented to this cruelty, but applauded the piety with which she avenged the deaths of her husband and father on an innocent man—she who had so well recompensed a guilty one. Still Gendioche, whom they had nearly forgotten in the delights they were experiencing in love and cruelty, had assembled all his troops, and was advancing to punish a faithless wife, and avenge himself on a perfidious guest, who had only succoured him in order to violate the rights

of hospitality, and give law to his dominions : but Pharamond, in every way successful against his rival, overthrew his troops, killed him with his own hand, took possession of his dominions, was received by Rosamond as if he had triumphed over her most mortal enemies, and with the same hand that was yet reeking with the blood of her husband, received hers.

" Whilst these things were passing amongst the Burgundians, Clodio's reputation extended as far as his conquests. He had become master of Chalons, Rheims, and Treves, and had undertaken the siege of the strongest place occupied by the Romans. So much glory made Pharamond jealous, and Rosamond full of rancour and envy. She had just given birth to a son—whose parentage being doubtful between Gondieche and Pharamond, and which she desired to be heir to the throne ; in order to remove the legitimate successor, she filled Pharamond's mind with evil impressions and every kind of dark suspicion. Clodio received orders to suspend the progress of his arms until the return of his father. He did not obey, because his enemies were preparing succours for a place he was on the point of taking. He took it by assault, and his success by no means diminished the amount of crime imputed to his disobedience. His father was coming towards him with rapid marches ; this last victory increased his jealousy ; and Rosamond, who controlled his mind as well as his heart, had no trouble to persuade him that a young upstart, puffed up with glory and good fortune, the rising sun whom the people and soldiery adored, and who already felt himself authorised to disobey his father and king, would not pause here, when he should become weary of waiting for the crown. Nothing more was requisite to determine a man who felt himself capable of the same feeling and designs of which they accused his son. Clodio, however, was so far from having any such intentions, that he quitted the army, and hastened to meet his father. What was his surprise when he

found himself arrested by his orders, instead of receiving the praises and caresses he anticipated. He spoke in his own justification with so much grace and dignity, that Pharamond, who could not refute what he advanced, seemed as if his distrust and hatred were increased by his very innocence and the injury he had done him. It was not so with Rosamond : her heart was changed from the moment he appeared and spoke. Her weakness was glory, and she found it more attractive in a figure like that of Cledio than she had done in Pharamond, who was now hateful to her ; and, as impetuosity ruled every movement of her heart, she resolved to get rid of him, not reflecting for a moment whether or not this would lead her to the summit of her desires. Fate spared her this crime, for Pharamond died of apoplexy the same night ; and Rosamond, urged on by her new infatuation, and full of confidence in a beauty which hitherto nothing had resisted, appeared before Cledio with every charm with which she could invest herself, making a merit of disliking the injustice and harshness of a husband who was scarcely cold, in order to give a value to the eagerness of her advances to the son, as evident as they were ill-timed. The son of Pharamond gazed on her with admiration ; but the horror he had conceived at her cruelties, the report of which had reached his ears, preserved him from her attractions, or rather there was no room in his heart to receive the impression of charms that had subdued so many. However, he dared not see her again ; and, without punishing her with the severity he was advised to put in force, and which all the ill she had done so well merited, he contented himself with shutting her up in the wildest spot in the forests of Ardennes, where, in all the horrors of remorse and the tedium of a protracted imprisonment, she ended her days miserably, little pitied in the last misfortunes of her life, and less regretted upon her death.

“ Such were the adventures and character of two persons of

unquestionable fame in history, but therein described in a manner very different from what I have just told you. As for Clodio, after having confirmed all that his father had usurped or acquired in Burgundy, and taken care that Rosamond's son should never be in a position to dispute the succession with him, he turned his steps and his thoughts with extreme eagerness towards the city of Troyes. He did not long remain there ; and not finding any employment for his arms, he turned them in another direction, and made other conquests, which, however, he did not retain tranquilly. The famous *Aetius*, the Roman general, began to re-establish far and wide the affairs of the Empire ; and Clodio, the most powerful of those who had recently established themselves on their ruins, gave way wherever he came in collision with this great captain. He was tempted, however, to try his fortunes near Tongres, whither he had pushed his conquests, with this redoubtable enemy ; but fortune was so hostile towards him in a battle in which he had assembled all his forces, that he not only abandoned the field to the conquerors, but the greater portion of the territory he had just gained ; and, repulsed within the limits of his first dominions, he was compelled to remain there for many years. It was during this peaceable interval that he married Clotilda, the daughter of Gondioche and Rosamond. She had none of her mother's qualities—but modesty, gentleness, and the absence of any remarkable beauty, succeeded in winning the regard of Clodio, who at this period seemed to fear nothing so much as women of excessive beauty. This had not always been his taste. Troyes, one of his earliest conquests in war, was the sole place where he made any in love. This city having been defended to the last extremity, refusing to accept the most honourable terms of capitulation, was at last stormed, and Clodio, in the boiling ardour of his youth, and under the first influence of anger,

had resolved on putting all to fire and sword, when Gertrude, the governer's daughter, found favour in the sight of the irritated conqueror. She was fair; her skin was dazzling, and her figure tall and graceful. Whilst in her features shone all the advantages of lively youth, they expressed innocence and modesty. The timid glances she dared not cast at Clodio, had something so very softening in their humility, that they obtained what they asked, and what they did not ask. Her life and liberty, and those of the people, on the point of undergoing all the horrors of war, were not all that the son of Pharamond granted to her. His disposition was naturally amiable; and covered with so much glory, so young, what heart could resist him? That of Gertrude did not surrender, however, for a long time: the respect inseparable from true love was mingled in all the proofs of his affection which Clodio evinced to the modest Gertrude. The delicate scrupulousness of her feelings could not allow that he should urge his suit by any modes offensive to modesty. The disproportion between their births and positions was very great; still the resistance of Gertrude, founded on the nobility of her sentiments and the austerity of her virtue, stood her in lieu of all. He promised to marry her as soon as he should be at liberty to do so by the consent or death of his father. He then set out, with much regret, to fresh conquests, carrying with him as the sole favour of an adored mistress, the hope of possessing her by legitimate ties, and all that tender words, sighs, and tears could afford, to console his departure. Gertrude had appeared at the summit of her wishes when her lover had finally declared that he would marry her; all flattered her tender regard for him, and this regard was not inimical to his glory. However, in the midst of this happiness, she often appeared overwhelmed with profound sorrow; and in those charming hours when two persons who mutually love forget in each other

the rest of the world, a deep sadness deprived her of the joy that else would have absorbed her heart.

" Immediately that Cladio had departed, indifferent to the homage and respect which would have been accorded to her by her new fortune, and the rank for which she was destined, she imposed on herself a voluntary exile, and only sought the secret pleasure of being worthy of what she refused.

" There was in those days, at Troyes, an extraordinary woman, who passed for a magician. Her name was Albofide, although apparently she was the same of whom our authors and traditions make so much mention under the name of Melusina. For my part, I do not comprehend why posterity affects so frequently to change the names of persons, any more than the locality and circumstances of the events which tradition lumps down from preceding times.

" This female had fixed her abode on an island formed by an embranchement of the Seine, two leagues above Troyes. Her abode, situated on the bank of the river, projected on a gallery supported by marble columns, close down to the water's edge, and beneath were places commodiously arranged for bathing. A garden, filled with curious flowers, and ornamented with the rarest plants, always very carefully cultivated, extended along the bank. There was no attempt at magnificence; but remarkable arrangement and neatness rendered the whole thing delicious for its simplicity. No servant was visible throughout the house; yet every convenience of life was there to be found; nor was it possible to discover how or by whom you were waited on.

It was in this enchanted solitude that Gertrude sought a refuge from the world during the absence of her lover; she refused all attendance save that of one of her women; and a brother whom she loved tenderly was the only person who was permitted to see her. Albofide felt a friendship for the father of

her hostess. It was reported by some that she had taught him magic ; others held that their connection was of a different nature, and that Gertrude was his daughter. This, however, appeared incredible, for Albofide's appearance presented all that is most deformed and repugnant in age and ugliness, and no one had ever heard it said that she had been otherwise.

It was asserted that she was the daughter of an old Druid, very learned in astrology, who, upon drawing her horoscope, had discovered that she was destined to surpass all her sex in beauty and in lightness. The latter was considered by the old gentleman as a superfluous addition, and accordingly he set to work, thumbing all his books over again, in the vain hope of discovering some mistake, but he always found the same thing; and at last he was tempted to drown the future beauty, that he might be spared the grief of seeing his daughter reach that extreme point of coquetry which had been promised her by her stars. The old Druid was not aware, however, that the lightness accorded to her by her favourable destiny applied only to her body. So perfect, however, did this beauty grow, that all who saw her were lost in astonishment at so much loveliness ; but none were so profoundly impressed with the fact as herself. Her father, who observed this, looked upon it as the first and natural effect of her destined inclination to form tender attachments ; and wishing to turn her weakness to some advantage, admonished her that the preservation of those charms, on which she so fondly doated, depended upon her cruelty, and that if she once yielded to the prayers of a lover, she would become as hideous as she was beautiful. The only way of avoiding so terrible a misfortune was carefully to shun the approach of all men ; and in order effectually to avoid their influence, she was not to give them time to speak ; for when a young lady ventured to listen to them, it was almost impossible for her not to believe all they said. This was more than enough to persuade one

who already despised everybody but herself. The danger with which she was told that the society of men would threaten her charms, inspired her with some alarm. In vain did a multitude of lovers daily declare their passion for her ; in vain did the echoes unceasingly repeat her name ; and in vain did every tree bear it engraven on its bark ; nothing moved her, save the dazzling glances of her own eyes ; and she easily managed to rid herself of this army of admirers, either by flight or by the coldness with which she treated them. The respectful lovers, accordingly, after languishing some time, quietly died off, after the usual fashion, and gave her no great trouble ; but there were some of a more ardent temperament, and others of a more importunate disposition, who frequently gave her occasion to exercise her ingenuity.

At last, she grew heartily tired of running, when she was not disposed to take that kind of exercise, and of being persecuted by rival admirers of her own beauty, when engaged in contemplating her charms reflected in some tranquil stream. In disgust, she renounced all society, and gave herself up entirely to the thankless worship of her own person, seeking out every retired spot where she could indulge in the undisturbed contemplation of herself. Cupid became nettled at her indifference, and resolved to avenge the lovers whom she had abandoned, by the most distressing misfortune that could befall her.

Among the thousand brilliant charms which decked her person, the least enchanting was, perhaps, her hair ; it was, however, of the most beautiful shade imaginable, and so long and thick, that whenever she chose she could entirely cover herself with it. One day, as she was combing it out by the side of a river, where she had just been bathing, a stag, whiter than snow, pursued by hunters, leaped into the stream, and while his pursuers were looking for a ford, swam across the river, and advancing towards her, laid himself gently at her

feet ; he appeared exhausted with fatigue, and seemed to implore her protection by the most sorrowful and languishing looks. Never had she seen a more beautiful creature, or one more worthy of compassion. Laying her hand upon him, she began to soothe and caress him ; but scarcely had she touched him, when she saw him transformed into a man. Her surprise scarcely lasted more than a moment, for in the danger that threatened her, she immediately betook herself to the infallible safeguard of which she deemed herself possessed. She was almost entirely naked, and modesty lending additional swiftness to her usual lightness of foot, she flew rather than ran ; but it seemed as though this adventurous lover, to whom Cupid had lent his swiftest wings, still retained the qualities of the stag, for all the exertions of the fugitive could only keep her a few steps in advance. In her hurried flight, the wind threw her hair into the most wanton disorder ; but she was too jealous of the least of her charms to suffer it to be thus exposed to the profane gaze of her pursuer, and plunging into the first wooded cover that presented itself, she fell into the fatal snare she was endeavouring to avoid. Scarcely had she advanced a few steps when her beautiful hair became entangled in the surrounding shrubs, each twig retaining as much as would have set up a respectful lover for life, but her pursuer was not sufficiently so to content himself with the precious spoil. The branches of a tree, in which the whole of her hair had entangled itself, at last arrested her flight. In vain, at this fatal moment, were all her prayers, her threats, and her struggles to defend herself. She had, unfortunately, to do with one who was no loser of opportunities. He did not love her enough to fear her displeasure, and thought her too beautiful to yield her obedience. In short, the cruel god, who had resolved to punish her, gave her up to the full extent of her fate. I shall not add how the wicked wags of the time related, in telling the story, that her

despair; at the conclusion of the adventure, was not of an alarming nature, and that her misfortune did not appear so great but that it admitted of consolation, had it not cost her the loss of all her charms ; but when she had lost these, life became hateful to her ; she avoided the fountains as studiously as she had sought them before the terrible transformation ; and yet the metamorphosis, which cost her such an abundance of tears, was purely imaginary. How vain are all precautions against the influence of so malignant a star ! Prudence itself is frequently the very cause that hastens the accomplishment of our destiny, when we fancy we have deferred it by an unwavering precaution.

Albofiède's father had deceived her in order to render her prudent. All his warnings about her losing her beauty when she lost her innocence, were a mere fiction, never had she shone resplendent with so many charms as when she believed herself deprived of them for ever. Far from her taking any steps to undeceive herself, instead of being consulted for the truth, all those rustic mirrors, before which she had spent so many agreeable hours in egling her beautiful eyes, had now become her utmost aversion. Night and day she wept over a misfortune which existed only in her imagination. But what greater evils are there than such as spring from this fruitful source. The fairies, at last, were moved with pity towards her, but while they only desired to alleviate her distress, they unfortunately augmented the piteousness of her plight. While in the very height of her despair, she happened to meet one of them, who promised to grant her any boon she desired ; telling her, at the same time, to be cautious in her choice, as once granted the gift could never be recalled. Alas ! that so promising an offer should only be a fresh snare for the ill-fated Albofiède ! Could she think of anything but that which was the eternal subject of her reflections ? The boon she asked

was that she might undergo a complete change from her head to her feet, and that her appearance might become as different as possibly could be. The wish was granted, and scarcely had the last words fallen from her lips when she became so hideous that the fairy ran away quite frightened. Shortly after this metamorphosis, another fairy appeared before her just as she was about to take a look at herself in some neighbouring fountain. The fairy offered her another gift, but so great was her impatience to admire herself once more, that she could hardly stop to think of a wish. At last she requested that she might live in the enjoyment of all the beauty she then possessed, as many years as she had hairs on her head. The little fairy shrugged her shoulders with pity at this absurd request, but was obliged to grant it. No sooner was she confirmed, as she imagined, in the possession of beauty,—the duration of which was to be measured by the quantity of hair, which she fancied herself to have now recovered, with the rest of her charms,—than she ran with all her haste to the nearest fountain, where she might enjoy the pleasure of seeing herself once more, after so long a separation. What was her horror, when, instead of the incomparable beauty she expected, she saw a horrible withered and deformed old hag, whose face, uniting all the repulsive features of decrepitude, was relieved by the magnificent ornament of three straggling grey hairs. At first, she was unwilling to believe that it was her own image, but when she observed that all her gestures of astonishment were repeated by the odious figure, all doubts of her misfortune were removed, and she almost let herself fall into the water when the horrible conviction reached her. After returning to her former lamentations, for the loss of her beauty, she derived some little consolation from the thought, that she had only three years to live in horror of herself. The occupation in which she now took most delight, was to reckon the

moments as they glided by and brought her nearer to the term of her misery, hiding herself, during the day, in the darkest and most sequestered caverns, and wandering, at night, over lonely deserts, and through the most gloomy forests. In this truly miserable course of life she had at last managed to drag herself on to the twelfth month of her last year, and was reckoning on having now only a few days more to inhabit the wretched body to which her destiny had condemned her, when having, one very dark night, wandered among a number of rocks and precipices, in the midst of which she was vainly endeavouring to lose herself, she at last reached the very island in which she afterwards established her abode.

Here, what she imagined to be a fire shed so strong a light on all surrounding objects that they became as visible as in broad day. Next to herself, her greatest aversion was anything approaching to light: so violent, however, was her curiosity to know whence it could proceed, that she immediately crossed the river in order to satisfy her mind. The first thing she saw, was a little negro lying asleep; he wore a necklace inlaid with such sparkling jewels that it was impossible to look at them. She was some time before she could prevail upon herself to approach him, for he was even uglier than herself. Yielding, at last, to her extreme desire to possess herself of a treasure that was only fastened to its wearer by a little bit of thread, she approached him, although nigh upon fainting at the ugliness of his person, and more especially the disgusting odour of his breath. Having succeeded in unfastening the necklace, she was about to withdraw with her booty when the little monster awoke. With his eyes open, he was a hundred times uglier than before, and she would have immediately run away, but that with her beauty she had also lost all her swiftness. The Moor did not appear particularly anxious about the theft she had committed, but merely informed her

that the object was of much more value than she fancied, and gave her permission to put it about her neck, provided that she immediately crossed back to the other side of the river. The condition seemed no very hard one to comply with, and though she had only a few mere days to live, she appeared enchanted to have gained possession of the precious bauble. She immediately stepped into the water, surrounded with a halo of dazzling light, but what was her astonishment to see all the brilliancy of the jewel effaced by the splendour of all her former beauty, which she beheld reflected in the water. Her joy was too immoderate to last very long, and, to her extreme despair, the little wretch declared that she must either give up the jewel or yield herself to him. At first, swelling with indignation, she threw the precious treasure at his head ; but when she looked at herself again in the water, she shuddered at the sight, and turned her eyes towards the Moor. His whole person, from head to foot, presented a detestable spectacle of ugliness and deformity ; after a good deal of haggling, however, she consented to purchase back her beauty. Her little bridegroom was a great magician, but he was not sufficiently powerful, however, entirely to revert the decree of the fairies, and as soon as the daylight began to dawn, Albellède appeared as ugly as ever. In order to assuage her grief at this last calamity, the little sorcerer, after dipping the last solitary hair of his mistress in the juice of an herb, which made it so tough that no power could break it or pull it out, he taught her the mysteries of his art. She could foretell the future, and force the elements to obey her, and when she chose, she could exercise the power of magic to its fullest extent. Engrossed by the acquirement of such profound knowledge she gradually lost her extreme sensibility with respect to her beauty ; and the little negre, who had only really cared for her during the few moments when her beauty

had returned to her, left her in the peaceful possession of her island and her enchantments, and took himself off.

This fanciful tale may perhaps have appeared rather too extensive a digression to occur in the midst of the truthful history to which you have been listening. But to resume.

Clodio, as I have already related, succeeded his father. Six months had he been absent from his beloved Gertrude,—six months that were as so many centuries to one so passionately enamoured as he. She had never once been away from his thoughts during the whole of this period; and absence, which so often weakens the ties of the most faithful attachment, especially amidst great and serious occupations, had, in his case, only strengthened them. He set out on his journey, filled with eager desire again to behold the object of his adoration, and restore her to happiness. What greater pleasure can a lover taste than so charming an anticipation? At every step that brought him nearer to her, his imagination pictured her plunged in grief at his absence, and languishing with impatience for his return. How delightful was the thought that he was about to put an end to all her sorrows by making himself again the happiest of men. With so flattering a prospect before him, a man generally travels at a tolerably round pace, and accordingly his arrival anticipated the very report of his departure for Troyes. His surprise at finding Gertrude no longer there, was as great as that which he had expected to cause her by his unexpected presence. The only person who was aware of the step she had taken was her brother. Alarmed that he could obtain no intelligence of her, Clodio sent for the brother in question, who was not, however, discovered without considerable trouble, so exactly did everything seem to conspire to drive him to desperation with impatience. When, however, with all the impetuosity and disorder that mingled love and fear inspire, he had pressed him with a hundred questions at once, concerning

his sister, and found him silent and confused, he made no doubt but that she was dead, and gave himself up to rage and despair. Fearing the effects of his extreme grief, his mistress's brother, apologising for his reserve on the score of his sister's command that he should never reveal the place of her refuge, offered to conduct him thither. Never did such a burst of joy succeed so cruel a state of affliction as Cladio's fears had thrown him into. He seemed to acquire a new life on being assured of that of his mistress, and he asked no more to grant a full pardon to the offender. A boat was prepared and manned with the strongest and most expert oarsmen that could be found, in which, accompanied by his guide alone, he embarked. Entirely pre-occupied with the pleasure of causing his mistress an agreeable surprise, he prevented her brother from sending any messenger beforehand to apprise her of his arrival. Meanwhile the exertions of the boatmen urged them forward with incredible swiftness, but which was far below the desires of him who was now grown the most impatient of mortals. So transported was he with the anticipation of again beholding, in a few moments, his beloved Gertrude, that he was unable to contain himself, and urged the boatmen, already exhausted with their labours, to fresh exertions. He would at one moment fall to and embrace the brother of his mistress, and the next, commence reproaching him for his cruelty, in having left him for a single moment in a state of suspense which had almost cost him his life. But, instead of returning his embraces and answering the hundred impetuous and tender inquiries of Cladio respecting his sister, he remained obstinately silent, and seemed as though each time Cladio embraced him he would willingly have jumped with him into the river. Meanwhile, as Cladio was wondering at the coldness and sullen dejection with which his friendly advances were received, the little boat bore alongside beneath the gallery which jutted out over the stream.

Just as he was leaping upon land he fancied he heard groans issuing from within the house. So solicitous was his affection, that everything alarmed him. Calling to the brother of Gertrude to show him the way, he was thrown into a fresh state of astonishment at the slowness and evident reluctance with which the latter was quitting the boat. As they continued to advance, the complaints uttered by the voice he had heard seemed to grow louder and higher, till at last a succession of sharp piercing shrieks convinced him that some violence was being done to the person from whom they proceeded. Breaking open the door of the place whence they appeared to issue, he beheld his lovely Gertrude stretched on the floor in the arms of an old beldame, and the little being to whom she had just given birth lying beside her. At the sight of the old woman and of the child he stood transfixed to the spot, while the mother, just recovering from the swoon into which the last pang had thrown her, feebly opened her eyes. Great Heaven! what a spectacle awaited her, and how terrible did the sight of him whom she loved more than her life appear to her at such a moment. A second swooning fit saved her from all the horror of her reflections, while jealousy and rage were fiercely contending in the bosom of Clodio. The conflict soon terminated. His mistress was recalled to life by a fresh succession of pains; and the excruciating cries they wrung from her, the violent agitation into which her whole frame was thrown, effectually drowned the indignation of her lover, in compassion for her situation. He was already about to assist Albofliède, who was anxiously employed in tendering her assistance, when, after a fresh paroxysm, a companion was given to the little being who had just been ushered into the world. This reiterated testimony of her outrageous infidelity, the horrible distortion of her features during her agony, and the repulsive effects of this flagrant disclosure of her shame in his very presence, banished in an

instant from his breast all the interest with which he had previously beheld her. Hurrying back to his boat, he re-embarked, as deeply pre-occupied, during his return home, with the singularity of his adventure as he had been with his impatient fengings in leaving it. Satisfied to have been the dupe of his heart's first attachment, he felt no inclination to give publicity to his shame by a useless exposure.

While making preparations for his departure from a scene which would only have continually revived the memory of an adventure which he was desirous of burying in oblivion, he beheld, one day, Alboföde standing in the middle of the closet, to which he had retired for the purpose of writing. The surprise which her appearance and unexpected presence caused him, gave way to a kind of respectful feeling, as she addressed him in the following terms :—

“ The hapless Gertrude has ceased to exist ; she was innocent of the infidelity of which thou hast beheld the fancied proofs ; more than this I am not permitted to say in her justification ; time alone can effectually re-establish her reputation ; nevertheless, be persuaded of this that no man ever seduced her innocence, or triumphed over her virtue ; and Clodio alone, of all mortal men —— ”

“ Clodio ! ” exclaimed the prince, abruptly breaking into her tirangue ; “ can it be that Clodio is the unconscious father of the children whose birth he beheld ? But no matter—care shall be taken of them without further inquiry into their real paternity ; and let me add, that I am not insensible to the misfortune of their mother, in spite of all that has occurred to efface her memory for ever from my heart.”

“ Forget her then ! ” said the sorceress, “ since thou canst only recall her memory to brand it with shame ; but learn this, that she has left behind her that which one day may become the arbiter of thy destiny.” As she spoke these words there

was something so marvellous in the light that darted from her eyes that he was constrained to turn away his own ; and when he sought them again she had disappeared. But let us now terminate, in a succinct narrative, the history of his adventures and of his reign.

From that time forth, all his thoughts, now that he had done with love, were turned towards war, for it was not till fifteen or twenty years after that he formed the matrimonial alliance of which I have already spoken, in which, however, all tender emotions of the heart had certainly very little share. His object had been to secure himself a line of successors, but he was never blest with any, although the virtuous Clotilda presented him, in the very first year of their marriage, with both a son and a daughter. Some part of the period which followed his union, he spent tranquilly enough in the calm enjoyment of repose and the sweets of domestic happiness. Ambition, however, and war, which was kindled on all sides, drew him away from these, and urged him in every direction, where he thought he could profit by the disorder into which the affairs of the empire had fallen.

Nevertheless, success did not always attend his enterprise ; the great Aetius had arrested in its fall the vast power that seemed sinking beneath its own mighty weight ; and wherever Clodius had him for an adversary, the scales of victory were ever turned to the advantage of his opponent. All the adventurous spirits, however, in search of fortune or renown, swarmed beneath his banners, in the assurance that, there, merit must eventually meet with its reward. Among those who had succeeded in achieving the highest distinction, he had particularly honoured with his esteem, and enriched by his bounty, a youth of unknown origin, who had never lost an opportunity of rendering himself distinguished. His person was agreeable, and, profiting by the inclination which the King man-

fested towards him, his assiduous zeal rendered him the favourite object of his liberality and the envy of his courtiers ; for favour is as unlimited in its growth as disgrace is rapid in its progress, when once the work of ruin has begun. All that was known of the new favourite was his name. He was called Meroué. To crown his fortunes the King gave him his wife's elder sister in marriage, whom he had himself rejected on account of her beauty.

At that time it was customary for the whole Court to follow the King in his warlike expeditions ; and, as the fortune of war is uncertain, the ladies, instead of beholding a brilliant succession of triumphs and victories, were sometimes treated with a spectacle of an entirely reverse character.

The nuptials of the King's sister-in-law, which were celebrated in the neighbourhood of Laon, in consequence of this practice, had nigh proved fatal to the French army. Clodio had advanced in order to protect this place from an attack with which it seemed menaced on the part of the Romans. The vigilant Aëtius surmised that the distance of the camp, and the rejoicings to which the enemy would give themselves up, would offer a fair opportunity for a surprise. The event proved that he was not mistaken. Falling upon them at break of day, he found them overwhelmed with sleep and the effects of wine, defenceless, and without a sentinel to give the alarm. Meroué was the first who was sufficiently prepared to receive them ; running to the King's quarters at the first appearance of their danger, he rallied as many round him as he could muster ; rescued him from the enemies who had already surrounded him, and, after securing his escape, was fortunate enough to save his bride from the last indignity that could befall her. The Queen, happily for her, fell into the hands of the enemy's general. She was treated with all the respect due to her rank, and was sent back three days after, escorted by a guard of

honour. This was the last check that Clodio received; Aëtius, called in another direction to the defence of the empire, allowed him all necessary time to recruit his forces.

The counsels of Meroué, whose wisdom was equal to his valour, were of no small assistance to Clodio in establishing a powerful monarchy, which he succeeded in effecting at the end of a few years. So high was the King's opinion of his favourite, and all that related to him, that he never could be prevailed upon to believe he was in earnest, when the latter frankly confessed that he believed himself of obscure origin, as he never failed to do whenever the subject was alluded to. "I see no reason, sire," he would say, "to blush for such a circumstance. We are not masters of that part of our fortunes. I should be happy if my birth could answer to the position in which you have been pleased to place me. All I know on the subject is, that an old woman had me brought up in a most delightful spot, from which she drove me as soon as she thought I was in a position to make my way by my own merits, or perish bravely in the pursuit of glory. The first arms I bore were in your service. A sealed paper, which this old woman gave me to deliver to your Majesty, and which I thought of too little consequence to trouble you with, will probably furnish you with further information."

Clodio, who had been marvellously attentive to his discourse, opened the paper presented to him with evident emotion, and read these words—"Meroué, son of Gertrude, owes the light to an immortal father. The testimony of Albofiède must suffice to confirm the truth of this statement."

Clodio, having mused for a few moments after reading the above, embraced Meroué with affection, and said to him, smiling, that it mattered little who his father was; mortal or immortal, he had not behaved in the most handsome manner to poor Gertrude, but that he willingly forgave him for his part of the

wrong; for the sake of his accomplished son. The esteem and confidence of the King went on daily increasing; and, in point of fact, Meroué held the reins of government during the latter years of his master's reign, which he rendered glorious by his signal victories in times of war, and happy by the establishment of a peace which restored tranquillity and abundance to the subjects of his new dominion.

Clodio died at Rheims, where he had established the seat of his government, having confided the State, and even his son, while still in his minority, to the guardianship of Meroué. He accepted both these important trusts, in the full intention, by his zeal and fidelity, of acquitting himself of all that he owed to the memory of Clodio. But Fortune dispensed matters to a different end.. He was called upon to place himself at the head of a powerful army, and to march against the barbarians, who, after ravaging the empire under the conduct of Attila, were now overflowing the neighbouring provinces. The danger was imminent; but the confidence of the army in the valour and skill of Meroué dispelled all fears. One and all, however, refused to march against so formidable an enemy unless they were headed by a king. The son of Clodio, already of age to bear arms, they despised for his stupidity in remaining under the guidance of his mother. Yielding at last to the general wish, Meroué was raised upon a buckler in the midst of the army, and proclaimed King of the French, with all the pomp of military ceremony. Heaven, by a series of brilliant successes, seemed to have sanctified by its approval this act of injustice.

He joined his troops with those of the great Aëtius; and these two renowned generals, after defeating a portion of the barbarian army near the town of Orleans, to which they had had sige, and after having weakened them still further in a number of subsequent engagements, came in presence of the King of the Huns, on the plains of Chalona, where he had assembled

in battle array the innumerable host of warriors whom he commanded. So valorous and successful was the attack they made upon him, that more than a million were left dead on the field.

Meanwhile the widow of Clodio, taking alarm at the first report of the ingratitude and treachery of Meroué,—for in this light did she view his ambitious proceeding,—refused to listen to his protestations that he had only accepted the crown in order to preserve it for her son. Talking with her her son and her daughter, she fled, unmoved by the tears of her sister and her repeated assurance of the fidelity of her husband; nothing could shake her conviction.

Previous to his last defeat she had sought out Attile, confidé to him the person and fortunes of the young Prince, and upon receiving his assurance that he would chastise the usurper and reinstate her son in the enjoyment of his rights, she had meditated a retreat into the country of the Burgundians, where the memory of Gondioche still preserved a number of partisans. At the news of Attile's defeat, however, in which it was reported that her son had perished, she determined to seek a refuge under the protection of Aëtius, of whose generosity she had already experienced the effects. She repaired accordingly to the town of Aquileia, whither this great man had just led the Roman army; while Meroué, on his side, having re-established tranquillity in the kingdom, had in like manner returned to the capital of the French. He was touched at the step which the unjust suspicions of Clotilde had caused her to take; but the report of the death of Clodio's son being everywhere confirmed, he consoled himself in the possession of a crown which from that time he seemed to hold, not only by the directions of its founder, but by the unanimous suffrages of the French.

Fortune, from that time forth, left him nothing to wish for; prosperity anticipated his wishes, and every project he undertook terminated in success. His consort presented him with a

successor, just as he had become so firmly established in the possession of his kingdom, that he had no other happiness to desire. He visited all the provinces under his dominion, and everywhere he found his name coupled with praises and benedictions. He appeared to be desirous of establishing the seat of his government, amidst the blessings of peace, in some spot worthy the magnificence with which it was his intention to endow it. Troyes fixed his determination ; he looked upon this town as the place of his birth. The choice was not a happy one ; but it is the weakness of great men that they prefer entering into a conflict with nature, and conquering all difficulties by the resources of art and the profusion of wealth, rather than submit their pride to the counsels and proposals of others, however wise they may know them to be.

Meroué devoted much time to a useless search after the famous Alboflède, but nowhere could he obtain any tidings of her. He paid many visits to her extraordinary place of abode, whence she had delivered so many oracles ; and to preserve the memory of this spot for ever, it was here that he displayed his magnificence in exhausting all the resources of art and invention to render the little island one of the rarest wonders the world had ever beheld.

It has been asserted that certain tablets were found, during the execution of these works, which were written on in the hand of Alboflède ; and that among a number of predictions they contained a history of Gertrude's adventure, who, while bathing on the shores of this island, was surprised by the divinity of the stream ; that she presented him with twins, of whom Meroué was the first-born, and that while she devoted herself to the care of one, the other was delivered up to its father. Everything that tended to give a flattering colour to the origin of their King, was immediately received by the people as undoubted truth.

While Meroué is establishing his residence amidst a thousand enchantments at Troyes, and spreading a tale respecting his birth which the sceptics of that time looked upon as fabulous, let us turn our attention to what befel the unfortunate remains of Clodio's family among the Romans.

The youthful Valentinian was then Emperor. So abandoned was this prince to every excess into which the pursuit of pleasure and a mind naturally inclined to evil could betray him, that the virtuous Aëtius, with all the authority with which his important services invested him, was scarcely able to restrain the impetuous violence of his career.

The reception which Clotilda and her daughter met with, in the retreat afforded them by this great man, exceeded all their expectations. Aquileia was at that time the seat of empire; for Rome, so long the mistress of the world, seemed now,—since the weak-minded Honorius had abandoned her to all the fury of the barbarians,—entirely deserted by his successors. Aëtius omitted nothing in his endeavours to soothe the affliction of a great queen, that could prove the magnificence and refinement of a nation who held all other people in the light of barbarians. But in order to render his protection effectual, it was necessary that he should find her a place of safety against the attacks of a superior power. The daughter of Clodio was possessed of more than ordinary beauty, and the first care of Aëtius was to conceal her from the eyes of his master. An agreeable and magnificent mansion, which he possessed at a distance of a few miles from Aquileia, was selected as the retreat of the princesses. Here they were attended on with all the respect and consideration that was due to their exalted rank; and had Clotilda's sorrows been of a nature to admit of consolation, no place could have been better fitted to dispel them; but she had just lost a son who was the object of her dearest affections and of her proudest hopes; and she beheld

herself a fugitive at a court where her daughter, sole remnant of the race of Clodio, was condemned to pass the days of her youth in eternal solitude, or deliver up her charms and her innocence to the recklessness of the most violent of men. So cruel did her situation appear to the unfortunate queen, that her proud and lofty spirit was unable to bear up against it, and, devoured by perpetual sorrow, she at last succumbed and died in the arms of her despairing daughter, whom she left, at so tender an age, and in so deplorable a situation, with no other support than that of one who had formerly been the enemy of her house.

Aëtius was sensibly affected by the death of Clotilda; and the sad condition in which the Princess was left, increased the tenderness of his regard for her, and so interested him in her welfare that he determined to adopt her. This was no derogation from the rank to which she was born, for you are aware what was the position of a Roman citizen during the time of the Republic. Aëtius was a patrician; and in the time of the Lower Empire this dignity,—frequently the stepping-stone to the crown,—was not considered inferior to that of a King. He had no occasion to repent this excess of generosity. So virtuous and so exalted were the sentiments that animated the youthful Princess, that the Roman General's only source of anxiety, was the thought that such brilliant qualities should be buried in the unworthy obscurity to which the ungovernable passions of Valentinian obliged him to condemn her. From this painful situation he resolved at last to rescue her. Maximus, a young senator, appeared at that time the most deserving of the whole Court to be presented with such a bride. He mingled in all the pleasures of the Emperor, without sharing in the excesses to which the debauchery of the latter carried him. Seeing, with pleasure, that he distinguished himself as much for his moderation amidst a

corrupted youth as he had signalised himself for his valour amidst the perils of war, Aëtius selected him as the future heir to his immense wealth, and the worthy possessor of a still more precious treasure, the beloved daughter of his adoption. Maximus no sooner beheld her than he became sensible of all the happiness that was reserved for him ; nor did the daughter of Clodio treat with disdain the offer of such a heart as his. Time and further acquaintance only served to increase the passionate admiration of the one and the tenderness and regard of the other.

Valentinian gave his consent to the marriage of his favourite with a foreigner ; and, prevailed upon by the pressing entreaties of Aëtius, he even promised not to insist on honouring the nuptial ceremony with his presence,—a distinction which had not seldom proved fatal to the happiness of Romans who had married handsome wives.

Never was Hymen celebrated under auspices more apparently fortunate ; and from this union sprung the luckless Zeneysa, the last of an unfortunate race whom the indignation of Heaven has never ceased to persecute. At these words fresh tears flowed from the eyes of the lovely Zeneysa ; for now, indeed, I began to suspect that it was she ; and although deeply interested in sorrows still so keenly felt (notwithstanding the lapse of so many centuries), I was so tickled with the idea of finding myself *tête-à-tête* with a grand-daughter of the good King Clodio, that I was on the point of bursting into a fit of immoderate laughter, which would have proved sadly out of season. I kept my eyes curiously fixed on a person who, according to her recital, was old enough to have been the mother of a patriarch, and who from the beauty and youthful freshness of her looks, might pass for the goddess of Spring. She seemed aware of what was passing in my mind, and continued her discourse. The conclusion of this

narrative, she said, will clear up a mystery which appears to puzzle you ; but before I reach it, I shall be obliged to lengthen my history by the recital of adventures which will appear to you in some measure unconnected with it : however, in relating them, I shall do my best to relieve their dulness as much as possible.

Aëtius cherished a hope that the favour enjoyed by Maximus in the eyes of Valentinian, would protect his wife from the danger to which she might otherwise have been exposed by his unbridled licentiousness. The appearance of my mother at Court was like the dawning of a new star ; she eclipsed even the Empress Eudoxia herself, who had hitherto shone fearless of a rival ; but, instead of joining in the praises of her exquisite beauty,—with which his palace resounded,—Valentinian remained mute ; and he, who had always appeared the most susceptible of men, now stood alone in withholding his tribute of admiration from the new beauty. Maximus thanked his gods for the unexpected event ; but Aëtius, who could read the treacherous heart of his master, augured unfavourably of his silence, and judged it henceforward expedient that his eyes should not be allowed too frequently to rest on so dangerous a beauty. My mother received with eager acquiescence a proposal which suited her natural disposition, and contributed to inspire tranquillity in the mind of a husband, to whom she was tenderly attached. She took her leave of the Court the very day of her presentation ; and it was not through any unwillingness on her part that her charms were not exiled to a distance, that would have effectually removed them from the danger with which they were threatened. Meanwhile the Emperor, into whose heart their impression had already deeply sunk, from the first moment that his eyes had beheld them, felt his desires increased by her absence ; for with him the first impulse of a passion was to compass the

means of quenching it, in the possession of its object. The regard in which he still held the services of Aëtius had forced him, for a time, to dissimulate the extent to which his lawless desires had been kindled by the fatal sight of her beauty. When, however, every means to induce her return to the Court had failed,—when the Empress herself had vainly solicited it as a favour,—and the war of biting sarcasms which he had daily waged against the jealousy of Maximus, proved as bootless as the rest,—he grew tired of the constraint which so long a course of dissimulation had imposed upon him, and was about to resort to the last extremities, when, just as he was on the point of having her carried off by force, an enfranchised slave of Maximus, in the confidence of his master, imparted a secret to Valentinian which caused him to alter his design.

He informed him of a ring which my mother had made a present to her husband, and which he treasured so fondly that he would never allow it to quit his possession ; adding, that it was concerted between them that whatever commands he might send her to make her appearance at Court, she was to obey none unless accompanied by this pledge of their mutual affection. Upon this information the cruel and cunning tyrant devised a plan for the accomplishment of his designs, which proved but too successful. Maximus was passionately addicted to gaming. Valentinian, aware of this weakness, secretly gave commands for the most dexterous adepts in this pernicious art, that could be found in his Court, to engage his favourite at play, and to seek every means of inducing him to obtain an advance of money upon this ring. They succeeded, though not without difficulty. He was astonished that any one should refuse to lend him money, and still more so that jewels of a much higher value should be rejected for a ring with which he had obstinately refused to part ; but being stung at his ill-fortune, and the Emperor not being of

the party, all suspicion of any treacherous design on the part of his adversaries was effectually lulled. No sooner had he parted with it, on condition that he should purchase it back when the game was over, than he received an order from the Emperor, while yet in the heat of play, commanding him forthwith to repair, together with Aëtius, to the suppression of a mutiny which, it was pretended, had broken out among some legions encamped at a distance of a day's journey from Aquileia. Maximus entered the snare laid for him with so much eagerness and impetuosity, that he set out without even previously returning home.

Scarcely had he quitted the town when his wife received the fatal ring from the hands of the miscreant who had betrayed their secret. In spite, however, of this convincing testimony of her husband's wishes, she hesitated a considerable time before she could persuade herself to seek him in so suspicious a place as the Palace of Valentinian. But everything conspired to insure her misfortune. Her husband's slave, whom she knew to be the depositary of his inmost secrets, undertook to conduct her thither; and he assured her it was in the apartments of Eudoxia that Maximus awaited her. She was unacquainted with the palace ; and you may imagine her astonishment when she found herself in the Emperor's apartment instead of that of Eudoxia, and beheld the dreaded Valentinian where she expected to meet her husband. Horror-stricken, she turned her eyes in every direction ; but, instead of the crowd with which she had been accustomed to see the master of that place surrounded, she beheld a deserted space that made her tremble with apprehension. She saw at once that she had been betrayed ; and attempting to seek refuge in flight, she found all egress securely barred. Valentinian strove by his address to inspire her with confidence, and, approaching her with the deepest humility, assumed at first the appearance and the

discourse of one who is touched with the most tender and respectful passion. Failing, however, in thus restoring her to confidence, he next brought into play all the resources that love, ambition, tears, and desperation can furnish to beguile the weakness of the sex, but with no other success than kindling fresh indignation against his treachery. The tyrant soon, however, threw aside the mask of deference, and appeared in the true colours of his odious nature. The tears, entreaties, and despair to which his hapless victim now betook herself in her turn, proved as unavailing as were her cries and the struggles with which she endeavoured to defend herself against his violence.

Meanwhile Maximus, having received intelligence while on his journey that all was tranquill in the quarter to which he was repairing, turned his steps homeward; and, wishing to lose no time in communicating his tidings to the Emperor, was astonished to find the doors of his apartment deserted by the servile crowd which usually besieged them. While he was approaching them, they opened to give passage to his wife. Never did the frightful gorgon appear invested with such dire terror in the eyes of those whom she turned into stone than did my mother in his; and to see him, one would have thought her appearance, once so dear, had produced the same effects. He stood transfixed, motionless, and apparently dead to all impressions; while my mother, struck as by a thunderbolt at discovering, in the first witness of her disorder, the very being from whom she would have hidden herself for ever, cast her eyes to the earth, and, turning away a countenance in which horror and despair were vividly depicted, fled from him so precipitately that she had already reached her apartment ere he had recovered from his astonishment. The innocent and hapless princess, unable to look with calmness on the horror of her situation, despatched a messenger to Aëtius, begging him to repair thither

with the utmost diligence ; and having ordered a bath to be prepared, entered it, and divided her veins. He arrived just as she felt herself on the point of swooning from the loss of blood : she was still able to summon sufficient strength to relate what had befallen her ; and having delivered into his hands the fatal ring which had seduced her, appeared consoled with the thought that she was dying in the arms of her father, and that by her death she was expiating the innocent wrong which she had done her husband. Aëtius, himself penetrated with the utmost grief, strove for a long time in vain to administer some consolation to Maximus. He was apprehensive of the most fatal consequences, from the impetuosity of his disposition and the violence of his resentment ; and dreaded lest, in his thirst for vengeance, he should raise a sacrilegious hand against the person of his prince. On the other hand, he was not without fears that the Emperor, solicitous for the safety of his own life, might carry his injustice and tyranny still further, by sacrificing that of a man whom he had already injured too deeply to permit him to live. My father dissimulated as much as he was able the extent of his affliction ; he even pretended to be influenced by all the arguments employed by his friend in order to appease him ; and soon afterwards bore his sorrow and resentment to the wars, which had broken out afresh between Attila and the Romans.

Ere he departed, Aëtius ventured to reproach his master with the blackness of this last crime, but his observations were received with evident displeasure. Having conjured the Empress to take me under her protection, he set out in company with Maximus. Victory, as usual, everywhere attended his arms ; but, while he triumphed over the enemies of the empire, the conduct of Valentinian was a continual source of disquietude to him. There was no limit to the acts of cruelty and violence to which he now gave himself up, in

the absence of one whom he was beginning to regard in the light of an importunate censor of his actions. Maximus, at the bottom of his heart, felt a secret joy at every fresh intelligence of excesses which brought tears into the eyes of the generous Aëtius ; for, far from time having stifled in the bosom of the proud Roman his resentment of the cruel injury he had sustained, the violence he had done himself in concealing it, had increased his implacable hatred of the tyrant. Great Heaven ! to what means did he resort for the satisfaction of his injuries, and of what do we not become capable under the furious influence of revenge ! Maximus was well aware that so long as the faithful Aëtius watched over the safety of his unworthy master he could never accomplish his purpose : resolved, however, to perish himself rather than lose his revenge, he did not hesitate to sacrifice his friend to the furious desire which possessed him of washing out the wrongs he had received, in the blood of his master. Aëtius redoubled his reproaches in every letter which he addressed to him ; but those which Maximus wrote to the Emperor were couched in a far different tone. Flattery, a bait which is as dangerous to tyrants and evil-doers as it so often proves to heroes, failed not persuasively to convey the insinuation that the General of the Romans took the liberty of censuring the imaginary defects of his Emperor, only because he was jealous of his virtues ; that it was to be feared he was urged to render his name odious in the ears of the legions, rather by a desire of filling his place, than that extreme tenderness which he affected for the liberties of the Romans and the tranquillity of the empire ; and, lastly, that a subject who was adored by the soldiery, had it always in his power to be one no longer, whenever his ambition should get the better of his fidelity. This artifice, grossly conceived as it was, successfully worked upon a mind as pusillanimous as it was ungrateful. Aëtius was recalled under the pretext of a

pressing danger by which his master was threatened, and the command of the army was intrusted to Maximus. No sooner did the renowned Roman make his appearance at the Court than he fell assassinated at the feet of the Emperor, while kneeling to salute him. The report of his death soon reached the army, and a portion of the legions immediately hastened to avenge him ; while in Aquileia the whole populace rose against Valentinian, who was immolated—by the hands of his own guards—to the manes of the great Aetius, and the security of the public weal.

My father was immediately proclaimed Emperor by the senate and the army. But even this good fortune could scarcely console him that he had not with his own hand driven the dagger into the perfidious heart, which he had not been able to devote to his vengeance, without embracing in the sacrifice the most magnanimous and the most virtuous of men. When he took possession of the empire, I was as yet too young to be alive to the misfortunes of our family ; still less so was I to the revolutions which at that time brought about so great a change in my fortunes. I can only remember that I was brought up as the daughter of the Emperor, and that I looked upon Eudoxia as my mother. Maximus had married her shortly after his elevation to the Purple ; but whether out of policy or affection is uncertain, as there were arguments in favour of both. The odious memory of his predecessor, and a strong inclination on his part towards whatever was virtuous and just, soon rendered his reign so agreeable to the Romans, that he was in the enjoyment of the happiest tranquillity when Childebert, the son of Merowé, came to his Court. I was then informed of my mother's history—often had I shed tears over the recital ; and the aversion I had conceived for Merowé, and all his race, was in proportion with the wrongs which I imagined they had inflicted upon ours. Childebert had, however, come in

person to sue my hand in marriage. Merous, the most prudent of men, was desirous of securing his successor—by an alliance with the Romans—in the possession of a state, of which, from the time he had assumed its government, he had never ceased to extend the confines. The infirmities of age were already beginning to creep upon him ; and he could see that his son, more inclined to the pursuit of pleasure than concerned with matters of any serious import, would require the support of such a protector as the Emperor of the Romans, to maintain himself on a throne more powerful than it was firmly based.

Before the arrival of the young prince, I was, as I have informed you, fully disposed to detest him ; and when the object of his voyage was made known to me, I could not refrain shuddering at the thought of being united with a race which had proved so fatal to my family. His presence, however, in some degree modified my sentiments. His whole person was such as immediately to inspire liking ; his bearing was lofty and noble ; his address polished and insinuating ; and his mind full of vivacity and interest. But all these amiable qualities only succeeded in effacing the positive aversion with which I had been prepossessed against him, without, however, exciting in me sentiments of a more decided character in his favour.

As I had not then reached my twelfth year, my extreme youth was perhaps the cause that he paid no great attention to the beauty of which I had already been taught to believe myself possessed ; perhaps, too, he may have regarded me with indifference simply from the fact that I was destined to become his. Nevertheless his father was not displeased that he should remain at the Roman Court until my age should permit of the celebration of a marriage upon which he had set his heart. He nourished the hope that the character for magnanimity and virtue which still continued to invest the name of Roman,

would leave such an impression upon the mind of the young Prince as might counteract the tendencies to which he regretted to find it yielding. Childeric, unwilling to throw away the time that was to elapse before our marriage, directed his aspirations, wherever he could find an object deserving his attentions and his inconstancy. Every day fresh conquests, fresh infidelities, and fresh rivals, marked his career ; the Emperor himself was not exempt from the apprehensions which the young stranger excited in the husbands of the fair Roman ladies. The malignant influence of his star, fatal rather than conjugal in its character, threatened the domestic tranquillity which had prevailed in the family of Maximus since his marriage with Eudoxia. Although no longer possessed of those brilliant charms which belong only to the freshness of youth, she still preserved considerable beauty. The assiduous attentions and beseeching looks of one whose conquest was disputed by all the beauties of the Court, proved successful rather by the flattering homage they presented to her vanity than by any influence they had upon her heart. Maximus, by whom she was passionately beloved, perceived her weakness. In raillery and biting sarcasm he excelled ; and he would frequently attack the Empress in public with the most merciless pleasantries his jealousies could inspire him with, on the disproportion of her age with that of the youth whose addresses she favoured. There is no point upon which women are so susceptible of being wounded, when they have not entirely resigned all pretensions to youthfulness. She was stung to the quick, and already began to repent that she had ever allowed him to succeed the cruel Valentinian in her affections, by whom, amidst all his violence and disorder, she had never felt herself so grossly ill treated. But when, in the course of their secret bickerings upon this subject, he was rash enough to taunt her with having yielded herself to Childeric, with the same facility

with which she had been persuaded to marry him, by whose machinations her husband had been assassinated, her fury knew no bounds. Careful, however, not to betray her resentment, she kept it closely pent up within her breast, and resolved that this offensive reproach should cost him his life. She sought a reconciliation, the better to ensure her object ; the subject was now never alluded to ; Childeric and all that concerned him was banished from her mind, to make room for the sole dominion of her implacable desire for vengeance. She urged Maximus, on the contrary, to hasten the period of their nuptials, and to lose no time in dismissing a thoughtless stripling, who had so absurdly alarmed his jealousy. At this stage of affairs, news was received of the death of Meroué ; and his successor, more eager to wear a crown than to wed a mistress who was not the object of his own choice, departed with precipitation, deferring the celebration of his marriage with me until after his coronation.

It was not long after this that the Roman empire—a prey to frequent revolutions during its decline—experienced at last the causes which led to its final and entire ruin. Eudoxia, who continued to brood unceasingly over her hatred and her desire to be revenged, under the cloak of avenging the death of her first husband, communicated her design to a small party, which still continued to drag on an obscure and scarcely nominal existence, and consisted of a straggling remnant of the companions of Valentinian's debauchery, or the ministers of his cruelty. Genseric, the successor of Attila, who had so frequently been defeated by Aëtius, and whom that general had just before his death completely driven from the territories of the empire, having, at that time, re-assembled an army of Goths and Vandals, and being in intelligence with secret agents at Rome was preparing to advance upon that city. Maximus, advised of his designs, was collecting together his legions, in order to oppose

their execution, when he was apprised that he had already made himself master of the ancient city, and was now turning his army towards Aquileia, whither he was advancing by forced marches. At this intelligence, which sounded like a doom pronounced by the fates upon the remains of the largest empire the world had ever witnessed, the confusion of the Romans prepared them to fall an easy conquest to an enemy whom they regarded with contempt. Consternation spread itself among the troops ; the senate was seized with horror ; and the whole town became a prey to the wildest disorder. The accomplices of Eudoxia's design now seized their time ; and several of them setting fire to various quarters of the town, gave the signal to the rest of the conspirators. By accusing Maximus of having betrayed them, by his cowardice and neglect, to the fury of the barbarians, they raised the populace against him, and soon there was but one cry for his destruction. With more firmness, however, and audacity, than prudence, he presented himself to the fury of the multitude. Several of the hottest and most forward of the ringleaders he slew with his own hand ; but, far from assuaging their excitement, he became the mark for a thousand weapons. In order to avoid being surrounded, he retreated into the Palace ; but so obstinately and with such eagerness was he pursued, that he fell, pierced with several wounds, at the feet of the inhuman Empress, who had stepped forward rather to glut her hatred and satisfy her vengeance, than with any view to save her husband, who stretched forth his arms towards her in vain,—a victim doubtless offered up by the just resentment of Heaven to the manes of Aëtius, rather than in expiation of the murder of an ungrateful master and a cruel Emperor.

But Eudoxia was not permitted to triumph long in her barbarous revenge. Genseric appeared before Aquileia while yet the city was in the midst of the disorder and commotion into

which these recent events had plunged it. Its gates were opened to him ; but, incensed at the horrible crime which he was informed a woman had committed upon her husband ; and dreading the effects of so dangerous an example to the world as the spectacle of a people in arms against their prince ; he entered the capital of the Romans as though it had been taken by storm, and abandoned it to the fury, the brutality, and the avarice of his soldiers. Nothing was spared, save in the interior of the Palace, whither the King of the Vandals had immediately repaired. He refused to see the cruel Eudoxia ; and a few days after, I was brought away in the train of Genseric's followers,—the sport of the cruel destiny that seemed to pursue an august family, which it must be said had little deserved its caprices and its persecution.

Merciful Heaven ! what must the feelings of so young a creature have been amidst such scenes of horror and confusion, and the appalling shrieks which everywhere resounded. The terrible aspect of the soldiers, who drew near me in order to conduct me to the chariot in which Eudoxia was already seated, completed the disorder of my senses, and I fell into a swoon. Happy for me would it indeed have been, had I never recovered.

The lovely nymph appeared so moved at these words that I was alarmed lest she should fall into the state to which she had been alluding. It was in vain that she strove to continue her narrative, and to stifle the sighs by which she was continually interrupted. Yielding at last to her grief, after giving me to understand the extent to which she was moved by a look of exquisite languishment, she raised her hand to a golden cord which was hanging beside her ; as soon as she pulled it I heard a sound more harmonious than the most delicate skill could have elicited from harpsichords and theorbos, while at the same time a perfumed vapour suddenly filled the apartment,

and concealed every object from my sight. At last it gradually melted away, leaving behind a perfume which was quite strange to me, but which seemed the most agreeable I had ever breathed. Under cover of this mist, however, the fair divinity had vanished ; nor were there any traces even of the sofa upon which she had lain. Well ! I exclaimed, here I suppose concludes the adventure ; and since the goods are beginning to be moved, perhaps this Palace, with all its magical decorations, may vanish in like manner, and I may next find myself in the middle of a field, or beneath some bush, not quite sure whether I have been dreaming, or have actually seen all this.

But I was not left to dwell long upon these reflections. A most charming figure made its appearance, accompanied by a concert of hautboys and fiddles, whose music was as ravishing as any *bulli* ever composed. The young lady who thus presented herself, and who seemed to be preparing to dance, was habited in a mask ; her dress differed little from those worn at the opera, except that her petticoats were shorter in front, and all the jewels with which she was ornamented were finer and more sparkling. As soon as she raised her arms, and set herself in motion to commence the first step, I felt a thrill of admiration creep over me, so full of exquisite grace did this first movement appear to me. Ye gods ! I exclaimed ; if the face which she conceals from us be worthy of such a figure, to what danger would be exposed those who were permitted to behold it. The whole time she was dancing, I was in such ecstacy that she must have been delighted at the approbation she met with, had she remarked the changes that came over my countenance, and the number of times I raised my eyes to Heaven. Her feet, so charmingly modelled ; the accuracy of her steps, keeping the most perfect time ; her grace and elasticity ; all appeared to me so extraordinary, that the fear of

its concluding too soon diminished the pleasure of the most charming spectacle I ever beheld. Oh, Herod ! I exclaimed, when she had made her courtesy, if the daughter of thy mistress had danced thus before thee, every head in thy palace would have but poorly repaid her ; and, ashamed to have limited thy promised reward to half thy kingdom, she would have become the mistress both of thy heart and thy territories. My compliment was not heard by the dancer, who disappeared in some imperceptible manner, and was succeeded by a fresh scene.

Three ladies now entered with all the necessary apparatus for tea and coffee. Those who carried the table set it in front of me, and then placed themselves on each side, while the third, having laid out the things, made a profound obeisance after a fashion of her own ; for, instead of bending the knees, and so gradually sinking, she leaned her head backwards, and raising her outstretched arms, bent herself towards the rear. This ceremony I looked upon as rather barbarous, and my first impression was that she was fainting away ; but she immediately recovered her upright posture, and stood straight before me with her hands crossed, one over the other. Her hair was of a jetty black, her eyes very bright, and her complexion of a lively, though somewhat darkened tint ; and all these together contributed to give her a certain arch expression, which frequently produces a greater effect than the most faultless beauty. She who was on my right had hair of the most beautiful flame-colour I ever beheld in my life ; her eyes were black, her eyebrows brown, and never was a red-haired maid blest with so dazzling a complexion. Her neck and arms were of the same perfect whiteness ; and so full of animation were her looks that on turning towards her I beheld her smiling, as full of vivacity and playfulness as though she had known me all her life. The other was a fair beauty, elegantly formed, though sufficiently plump ; her large soft blue eyes were filled

with an expression of languor ; her action was graceful and natural ; while an air of tenderness, a little tinged with melancholy, and her head slightly drooping, made me judge that insensibility was not her defect. Their dresses and their ornaments were nearly similar to those which are at present worn, with the exception that their head-gear appeared to me somewhat taller, and that instead of ribbons they wore large *aigrettes*, producing, as they moved their heads, a most agreeable effect ; their boddices were scolloped out to a point in front, and discovered somewhat more of the bosom and shoulders. After examining with proper attention these three beauties, I turned to the repast which was laid out before me. Here would have been a fruitful field for your inventory-makers ; but you, if I remember rightly, entertain a proper contempt for these frivolous and wearisome ornaments which novelists use to eke out their narratives. I shall say nothing, therefore, of the magnificence of the service, the least precious article of which was a set of golden spoons inlaid with large diamonds. Nevertheless I began to survey the table with admiration, the tray, the milk-jug, and the cups ; but it was rather from politeness than curiosity, for all my interest was absorbed in the princesses in whose company I found myself. Accordingly I passed them once more in review with minuter attention, and observed that each was provided with a napkin, which she carried under her arm. I found in the glances of the red-headed nymph the same gracious and provoking reception that she had honoured me with before : the other was still as languishing and tender as ever ; and the lady who stood opposite to me requested to know if I would be pleased to have the tea served. I immediately perceived the incivility of which I had been guilty, and, rising with precipitation, I signified, after a profound bow, that I was extremely obliged to her.

" Speak, sir," she said, " speak without restraint. In the

absence of the divinity who presides here you are permitted to break the silence which was only imposed upon you against her will ; and since we do not possess, as she does, the gift of reading thoughts, you must be kind enough to explain yours.' I confess that I was delighted at the permission ; for though I am not much of a talker, I was never so troubled to hold my tongue as I had been ever since it had been enjoined me. Immediately addressing the little dark beauty who had just spoken : " No, madam," said I, " I shall not abuse the honour you would do me by accepting it ; but I conjure you to inform me, in the first place, whether I am awake ; secondly, whether it is expected that, like another Don Quixote, I shall allow myself to be waited on by ladies of your distinguished appearance ; and lastly, what has become of the divine personage by whom I was conducted hither, and of the lady who did me the honour to dance before me." " There is certainly," she replied, " an infallible means of proving that this is not a dream, and that would be to cut off one of your fingers, or pull out one of your eyes, which might be returned to you in a few days ; but I do not imagine," she continued, smiling, " that you will insist upon requiring such proofs in order to clear up your doubts. As to the nymph, she is now at Poissi, and, foreseeing that the things she had still to relate would renew her sorrows even to a more painful extent than those you have already heard, she requested me to conclude a narrative which her tears had so frequently interrupted. If, therefore, you prefer listening to me at once, to partaking of the refreshments which she has sent you, my companions will leave us together and await her further orders." At these words, the two ladies who had brought the table, carried it off together with what was upon it, and quitted the apartment, while the pretty brunette took a seat beside me, and, without taking any time to consider what she was about to relate, proceeded as follows with the history of Zeneyda.

CONTINUATION OF ZENEYDA.

BY MONS. LEVIS.

ZENEYDA, as you have been told, occupied the same chariot with the Empress Eudoxia, in the train which followed the cruel Genseric. This terrible ruler of the Goths crossed over into Africa laden with the spoils of all Italy ; for his soldiers had pillaged both Rome, the ancient city, and Acquileia, the new residence of the Cæsars. He led thither as captives, or rather as monuments of his victory, the widow of the Roman Emperor, and the grand-daughter of the King of the Franks. It is with the latter alone that I have to do ; but she was so young that her stay in Africa presents no feature of any interest. She merely shared the captivity and the sorrows of her mother-in-law, although innocent of her crimes ; and when, at the expiration of seven years, Genseric reconciled with the Emperor Theodosius, the younger, then reigning in Constantinople, sent Eudoxia back to him, Zeneyda again followed her. The young princess was then in her twentieth year, and her beauty was in the height of its brilliancy. The court of the Emperor of the East had never beheld anything more lovely ; and the Greeks, with all their love for hyperbole, had not contrived on this occasion to praise her above her deserts. The illustrious Pulcheria, sister to Theodosius,—a princess whose virtues and whose wit have been handed down in history,—took a delight in cultivating the natural disposition of Zeneyda ; she gave her lessons of wisdom which were of service to her in supporting the weight of affliction which subsequently overwhelmed her. She was at that time resplendent with youth and beauty, and several princes were rivals for the honour of her hand.

Among these the heir to the throne of Armenia appeared to hold the first rank. He had come to Byzantium to study Greek art, and to receive lessons from the celebrated philosophers who had worthily succeeded Socrates and Plato. But the eyes of Zeneyda had terribly distracted his attention from his studies : of all masters Cupid finds the most obedient pupils, and the prince neglected all others. The King his father was informed of this, through his minister residing at the Court of Constantinople ; and as it was his intention to unite his son with the Princess of Cappadocia, he lost no time in recalling him. When the heir-apparent of Armenia, whose name was Tigranus, in common with the majority of the sovereigns of that country, received this fatal command, he gave way to the most violent despair ; not that he was so far advanced in the good graces of Zeneyda, although he was treated no worse than any of his rivals, for she would sometimes smile on him with kindness ; and if a witty sally should chance to escape him, she never failed to applaud it. This was enough to furnish hope to a young man who was very much in love, and none was ever more passionately so than Tigranus. He felt that if he absented himself he should lose the fruit of all his endeavours, for the impression he had been able to make on the daughter of Maximus was too slight to resist the effects of absence. Accordingly he resolved at all risks not to quit Constantinople ; but knowing that if he persisted in remaining at the court of Theodosius, the King his father, whose inflexible disposition he was acquainted with, would inevitably claim him at the hands of the Emperor, he determined to dissimulate, and feigned obedience. He made every preparation for his departure, took leave of Theodosius in the usual form of imperial etiquette, and embarked on the Bosphorus for Trebizond, a port on the Black Sea, not far distant from Armenia. He sent his suite thither on board a transport vessel, while he himself sailed in one of

those single-masted ships used in the navigation of the Archipelago, and which are seldom manned by more than eight or ten sailors. On the evening of his departure, and ere they had left the Straits, he called them all together on the deck, and made them drink plentifully of wine and brandy ; when they were all drunk he threw himself into the sea unperceived. As he was a good swimmer, and the vessel not far from shore, he was not long reaching it. I omitted to observe that, to avoid a search which might lead to his discovery, he had left a paper on board addressed to the King his father, in which he stated his intention of terminating an existence which had become odious to him since he had been forced to leave the object of his desires.

A fisherman's hut furnished him shelter for that night ; and the next morning he exchanged clothes with a peasant, and returned, so disguised, into Constantinople. That he might run still less risk of being discovered, he adopted the precaution of tying a green bandage across his eyes, with a view of passing for a blind beggar. An intelligent poodle which he had purchased from the fisherman with whom he had sought refuge, proved of essential service to him. This dog, whose name was Roquinet, was fastened to him by a riband, and was soon trained to his business of appearing to lead him through the streets of Constantinople. On entering the city, the Prince of Armenia mechanically bent his steps towards the imperial palace, and stopped at the gates of the garden. His youth and engaging figure attracted attention, and excited the compassion of the charitably disposed ; the ladies more especially, whose hearts are naturally inclined to pity, seemed touched at the spectacle of so young and so handsome a man reduced to so piteous a condition, and all, with scarce any exception, who passed him, dropped a piece of silver into his dish. When he heard it fall, he would bow with a noble air, and, at the same time,

respectful air, which increased the interest that was felt for him, while Roquinet stood on his hind legs and made a courtesy. The bandage was not so tight across the Prince of Armenia's eyes but he could see beneath it, and he recognised one of the maids of honour of the Princess Zeneyda, who, on entering the garden, had stopped, as the others had done, to give him alms.

"Madam," said he, with a voice full of emotion, "I thank you most humbly for your kindness; but how much should I be indebted to you if, through your powerful protection, I could obtain admission into this beautiful garden, and refresh myself awhile in the shade of the plantains that stand round the great basin. My poor dog, who is dying with thirst, is even more in want of it than I."

The maid of honour requested the gate-keeper to allow the blind man and his poodle to pass, and while she was walking with the princess, she called her attention to him. Zeneyda's nature is compassionate; and to be unfortunate is at once to have a claim upon her heart; she drew near the beggar and gave him a golden piece, asking him at the same time by what accident he had lost his sight.

"Alas! madam," said he, "I must not complain of my blindness, for it has saved my life."

"How can that be?" replied the princess; "you excite my curiosity; but if your adventures are long, I shall not have time to hear them to-day; return to-morrow, and go to the pavilion which looks on the sea of Marmora; there I will listen to you with pleasure."

She accompanied these words with a smile so full of kindness that it would have been enough to turn the prince's head, had it not been done long ago. You may imagine that he did not fail presenting himself at the appointed hour on the sea-shore. He had sought to dress himself as becomingly as the simplicity of his attire would permit him; and it must be granted

that, beneath his cloak of coarse stuff, he looked more like a prince than did the greater number of his rivals, resplendent with gold and purple. Moreover, he never neglected anything, and remembering that his mistress had a fancy for dogs, he had washed and combed Roquinet, and had had him newly shaven and trimmed, carefully leaving him cuffs and garters, and a handsome tuft at the end of his tail; and never did poodle make so clean or so trim a figure. Zenyda was not long ere she made her appearance at the pavilion, and, seating herself amidst her ladies, the blind man was ushered into her presence. She condescended to caress Roquinet, who laid himself respectfully at her feet, and she listened with attention to the imaginary adventures of the prince of Armenia. I will not repeat them, as they are now devoid of interest, let it suffice to inform you that, under an ingenious allegory, Tigranus related his own story. As the danger would have been too great, however, had he discovered himself, he remained concealed in the character of a poor shepherd whose misery had been caused by love.

All the ladies admired the wit and the grace of the blind man ; and his bandage allowed him to perceive that Zenyda was even more moved at his narrative than the rest.

"Ah!" said he, when he retired to his humble dwelling, "how extraordinary is my destiny. While I was heir to a great empire, Zenyda appeared insensible to my love, and now that I present myself under the disguise of a wretched hind, the interest I inspire in her has something in it which is akin to love. It is indeed true that misfortune acts more powerfully upon a refined and noble temper than all the attractions of wealth, power, and ambition."

He was indulging in these and other reflections of the same kind, which, though perhaps not very correct, came from a heart deeply enamoured, when he was informed by the old

goody with whom he lodged, that the whole neighbourhood had been thrown into a state of excitement by a superb cavalcade which had just passed through the hippodrome ; she had been told they were the ambassadors of the King of the Franks, but she had forgotten his name. Tigranus knew but too well that it was the cruel Childeric ; he knew, also, that before the death of his father, Meroué, he had come to the court of the western empire to sue for the hand of Zeneyda, which had been plighted to him, her extreme youth alone having delayed the celebration of their marriage. Since that time, the captivity of the princess, in Africa, had removed all thoughts of it, and there was every ground for believing that a prince of Childeric's inconstant and licentious disposition had forgotten one whose incipient charms had seemed to make no great impression on him. This, indeed, was really the case, but political motives had induced him to renew an alliance by which he should acquire a title to Italy, whose conquest he was meditating ; and accordingly he dispatched ambassadors to the Emperor Theodosius, who were charged to demand of him the grand-daughter of Clodio. The prince of Armenia had soon guessed what was the object of their mission, which was indeed publicly made known the next morning, and he made no doubt but it would meet with perfect success. He knew the weakness of the Emperor, who, during his entire reign, had allowed himself to be governed by his eunuchs, and who, in all probability, would neither have courage nor generosity enough to resist the claims of a powerful monarch, in an affair which only concerned the happiness of a youthful and unprotected princess. It was evident, therefore, that nothing could prevent the execution of this fatal project ; although, had Tigranus been assured of his father's consent, and of that of the princess, he would not have found it difficult to carry her off, and conduct her into Asia, where the Franks would never have ventured to seek

her. But far from approving his son's designs, the King of Armenia entertained views which rendered them impossible. Cappadocia was within his reach, and he wished to marry him to its heiress. As for Zeneys, perhaps she might be tempted by the glittering offer of the crown of France, but even should she be indifferent to this allurement, it was not a whit the more probable that she would consent to wander about the world with a young man at the expense of her reputation. The prince of Armenia, whom these reflections rendered desperate, seriously made up his mind to terminate his existence; as it is always time, however, to have recourse to this extremity, he desired to carry with him to the regions of the dead the consolation of knowing that his lovely mistress did not look on him with indifference. In this hope, he took an ancient lyre under his cloak, being an excellent performer on that instrument, and, preceded by his faithful poodle, betook himself at night beneath the windows of the pavilion facing the sea of Marmora. He had not long been there, when he heard the voice of Zeneys, who, on that day, had come thither with no other company than that of her favourite maid of honour, to talk over the important event which was to determine her future destiny. Tigranus distinctly overheard her inform her confidant how repugnant to her was this union with a prince whose reputation was so unfavourable, and that necessity alone would force her into a marriage she had never desired, and which at that moment appeared to her more odious than ever. The pretended blind man, encouraged by these words, after a prelude upon his lyre, began to sing to this effect: "Since I have been deprived of the light of heaven, the sympathy of a kind heart became necessary to enable me to endure life; I have found it, and my woes are forgotten; but should it be torn from me, I die."

His voice was soft and melodious, and strong feeling imparted

a peculiar charm to it which made a deep impression on the heart of Zeneyda. She stepped forward, and by the light of the moon recognised the feigned blind man. But his was now no longer the humble deportment of a beggar. Standing in a dignified attitude, with his lyre in one hand, he resembled the Apollo of Delphi inspiring poets and lovers. It is probable that the Princess would have answered him, had not the poodle by his barking warned them that some one was approaching. It was the Prince of Thracia, one of the rivals of Tigranus, who, like him, was in despair at an event which destroyed his hopes for ever, and he had come to express his grief to the Princess, and to learn what were her final resolutions. The blind man withdrew within the hollow of a rock, while his dog kept such good watch that he would not allow his rival even to approach the pavilion ; at which Zeneyda was far from displeased, as she held him in aversion.

Meanwhile the Emperor, as had been foreseen, determined to accede to the demand of the King of the Franks, and charged his sister Pulcheria to signify his intentions to the Princess Zeneyda, who received orders to prepare for departure at the expiration of a fortnight. Resistance would have been useless, and she was obliged to submit. Theodosius made her magnificent presents, which were placed on board the galley destined to convey her to Marseilles. On the eve of her departure, she had come to bid farewell to the pavilion where she had spent so many happy moments, and from which she was about to part for ever, and was gazing on a portion of the Bosphorus, forming the most beautiful bay in the world,—on the picturesque shores of Asia,—the walls of Chalcedony,—the tower of Leander, cherished by all fond lovers, and the innumerable vessels which may always be seen ploughing those waves, when she beheld at the foot of the wall the faithful Roquinet. She looked around in search of his master, but he was not to be

seen. His dog alone was there, leaping up towards the window as though he would have jumped in ; but finding it was too high, he began scratching at the door, which Zeneyda ordered to be opened to him. He immediately ran up to her and stood on his hind legs, turning his back to her : for it had been raining, and his paws were dirty. While he remained in this attitude, the Princess perceived that he carried a paper beneath his collar, which was almost entirely hidden by his curly hair. She took it, and read as follows :—

“ Madam, the humblest of your friends, if he be a faithful and devoted one, is not to be despised. I offer you Roquinet : he is intelligent, and appeared to please you : fear not depriving me of him. You are about to depart,—life is odious to me, and without you I am unable to endure it.”

On reading this letter the tender-hearted Zeneyda could not forbear shedding a few tears. She took a pencil, and on the same paper wrote :—“ If it be absolutely necessary to preserve your existence that we should not be separated, prepare to follow me.” She folded the paper, placed it where she had found it, kissed the messenger, who expressed his thankfulness by wagging his tail, and bade him return to his master, which he did as fast as his four legs could carry him. Meanwhile, the Princess reflecting that the musical skill of the blind man might obtain him admission among the number of her followers, sent for the chief of the embassy, and informed him, that to beguile the tedium of a long journey, she intended taking with her a blind minstrel, who played remarkably well on the lyre, and had a fine voice. The ambassador, who already looked upon Zeneyda as the wife of his sovereign, felt no inclination to thwart her wishes, and in this manner the Prince of Armenia was received on board the imperial galley,—he and his poodle.

At the offset they had a prosperous passage, though somewhat lengthened by the calms peculiar to the Ægean Sea. It

was, however, in the fine season of the year ; the evenings were delightful, and for the most part the heat of the day was spent on one of the small islands so numerous in those seas, by the side of some limpid fountain, overshadowed by a natural arbour of myrtles and orange trees. During one of these halts they met with a remarkable adventure. They had disembarked upon a deserted islet near Antiparos, which is formed by a mass of rock indented on every side by creeks and caverns. The crew set up a tent upon the beach, and Zeneyda caused herself to be conveyed in a small skiff to the entrance of a spacious grotto, where she desired to bathe, accompanied by the ladies of her suite. She had taken the blind man with her, there being nothing in his presence to alarm her modesty, and she took great delight in hearing his fine voice sound through the natural vault of the grotto. He had seated himself upon a shelf of rock in the interior, and was tuning his lyre, while the ladies were putting off their attire, when suddenly a nest of pirates, inhabiting the recesses of the cavern, rushed out, and seizing first their jewellery and dresses, laid hands on the fair bathing party. The head of the troop, an athletic fellow, took Zeneyda in his arms and carried her into his haunt through a passage cut out in the rock. The Prince of Armenia, forgetting his blindness, ran after his lovely mistress, came up with the ravisher, and with a heavy blow of his stick laid him dead at his feet. Zeneyda, who had fainted away, the first thing on opening her eyes, beheld those of the blind man,—whose bandage had fallen off—beaming with a tender and voluptuous expression. I shall not pretend to define with precision the confused sentiments that agitated the heart of the Princess. Surprise, gratitude, and tenderness were certainly of the number, but modesty was apparently the most predominant ; for she tore herself away, blushing to find herself naked in the arms of a handsome youth, and could only utter these words :

"Alas! you are not blind, then." She then ran to rejoin her companions, who had also been rescued,—the crew of the galley, attracted by their screams, having routed the pirates.

In the mean time Tigranus had picked up his green bandage and adjusted it once more across his eyes. The discovery which the Princess had made decided her future destiny. She knew before quitting Constantinople that the blind man was in love with her, and she tolerated his passion, responding to it only by the tenderness of her pity for his misfortune. His blindness had increased the distance which the difference of rank between the daughter of an emperor and a beggar had established between them, and it was as though they had been a different order of beings between whom there could be nothing in common; but when she discovered that his blindness was feigned, passing suddenly from one extreme to the other, she believed in the first moments, from the nobility of his features and his daring courage, that there was something supernatural about him. Accordingly, as soon as she found an opportunity of speaking to him without witnesses, she said,

"You have deceived me: you are no more a beggar than you are blind. If the death of the Prince of Armenia were not so well ascertained, I should believe that he now stood before me."

"Tigranus loved you, madam," he replied, "and you beheld him with indifference: he was unable to endure it, and he put an end to his existence. It will fare the same with the poor blind man if your heart feel not a little love for him."

"I owe you my life and my honour," rejoined the Princess. "Be content with my gratitude: see whither they lead me."

She said no more on that day, as they were interrupted. Meanwhile they advanced on their journey; a light breeze from the south-west, the Egyptian zephyr, swelled the sails of the galley as it floated gracefully upon the waves. As soon as the

suit was sunk beneath the horizon, Zeneysda and her ladies would appear on deck ; the blind man was then summoned, and, accompanying himself with his lyre, he would sing the ancient glory of all the renowned places before which they were standing, and whose names were told him. At Naxos he sung the sorrows of Ariane, the inconstancy of Théseus, the Minotaur, and the amours of Pasiphaë. The god adored at Delos received also the homage of his song, and his voice seemed then to be divinely inspired. But when he had to celebrate the goddess of Cythera, he expressed himself in the most impassioned accents.

"Goddess of hearts," he said, "it is thou who dost animate and give life to all nature ; without thee the whole universe would languish ; youth would be barren and sorrowful, and old age, deprived of all consolation, would sink hopeless into the grave. Pour into my heart the nectar of thy presence ; let my veins flow with the liquid fire that devours without consuming ; pierce me with the arrows of thy son : his wounds are gentle, and the pains he inflicts are accompanied with sensations of delight."

As he pronounced these last words his agitation was so violent that he was unable to proceed ; his bosom became oppressed, and could only give forth a succession of deep-drawn sighs. Zeneysda struggled to suppress her own. During this interesting scene another of a very different nature was being enacted at the other extremity of the galley. The whole crew were assembled round Roquinet, who was performing a number of the most interesting tricks. He could leap, dance, fetch and carry better than any other dog, and he was so intelligent that he could mark with his paw what number was thrown by the dice ; and withal he was of a most obliging disposition : if any one let fall a glove or a handkerchief, he would never fail to pick it up, and faithfully return it. He was,

accordingly, a favourite with every one on board, from the captain to the lowest of the rowers. His master was regarded with no less favour ; for by his politeness and good-nature he had won the hearts of all. Nor is there anything astonishing in the fact ; for it has always been remarked, that among persons of a high rank it is always those whose generosity of heart corresponds with their noble birth who know best how to conciliate the affection of the lower classes. They have the art of descending without lowering themselves, and they are beloved without ceasing to be respected.

No further event of any importance occurred during the passage, and they reached in safety the ancient port of Marseilles. Zeneyda set out in company with the ambassadors to seek Childeric at Troyes, in Champagne, where he held his court. Ere she departed, she endeavoured to give the blind man his congé, and send him back to Constantinople, pressing him with warmth to accede to her wishes. Her conscience applauded this attempt, which was destined, however, to remain unsuccessful ; and, to say the truth, Zeneyda would have been afflicted at its success. Nevertheless she entertained no hopes, nor indeed did her lover ; but an invincible power constrained him to follow her. He did so, accordingly, with a feeling of sadness which increased gradually as the end of this fatal journey approached. They were within a few leagues of Troyes when Childeric appeared in sight, advancing to meet the Princess, and followed by a train of huntsmen. At that time elks were still to be found in the forests of Gaul, and the King of the Franks, a robust and courageous man, spent whole days in pursuit of these terrible animals ; sometimes he would be carried away by the ardour of the chase to such a distance that he could not return to his palace, and was frequently unable to rejoin his suite. He would then pass the night in a woodman's cabin, or in the hut of a maker of wooden

shoes, and the next morning these good people would act as guides to conduct him out of the forest, which was thickly wooded, and without road or path. Not long since he had lost his way in this manner, while hunting an enormous elk, and found himself at the foot of an old half-ruined tower. As it was pouring with rain, he took shelter beneath a shelf of stones jutting forward from the tower ; but what was his astonishment when he perceived a smell, as of some culinary operation, proceeding from a dungeon-grating hidden in the brushwood. He drew near, and, listening with attention, distinctly heard the bubbling sound of a boiling cauldron. Pressed by hunger, naturally adventurous, and being armed moreover with his hunting pike and a short sword, he determined to make his way into the interior of the tower. After having spent some time in search of the door, he discovered it at last concealed behind a stone slab covered with ivy ; it closed up the entrance to a flight of steps descending into a spacious vault, feebly lighted by a lamp suspended to the ceiling, whose bluish light gave a sepulchral colour to the surrounding objects. A large cauldron was placed in the chimney, and a little blackamoor from time to time stirred up the stew with a large bone, which had apparently belonged to the carcase of a horse. This was more than enough to settle the appetite of the King of the Franks, and he merely inquired of the negro scullion who was the person for whom this mess was cooking. The personage thus addressed was in no hurry to answer him, which you will not wonder at when you are told that he was dumb ; he merely pointed to his mistress, who was asleep in a corner of the vault on a heap of dry leaves. The Prince, who had not perceived her at first, there beheld with horror the most hideous creature Nature in one of her freaks ever took it into her head to put into the world. She was an old withered up hag, with one eye of glass and the other bleared ; her nose,

all beameared with snuff, was met half way by her chin, which was overgrown with a stubble of white hairs ; and, finally, her mouth was so puckered in that any one would have supposed she had none. She had but one hair on her head, but it was as stiff and hard as the bristle of a wild boar, and it was by this that Childeric recognised her, his father King Meroué having often spoken to him of the famous Albofiede's single hair. He greeted her respectfully, for she was just awaking, and begged that she would continue towards him the same good feeling she had always shown towards his family.

"What seek you here ?" replied the old woman in a sour tone. "Thirty years have I been trying to make that cauldron boil, and now it has not been boiling more than six months : I am in the thick of the operation, and I don't choose to be disturbed."

Childeric humbly entreated her pardon, and the sorceress, somewhat softened, said to him :

"Begone this instant ! My negro will show you the way. Tell it not to a soul ; but if you should marry, return hither, for you may want my assistance."

The King of the Franks left her, after thanking her many times ; inwardly determined, when Zeneyda should arrive, to pay her another visit, and demand her protection. As the forest happened to be precisely on the road by which the Princess was to arrive, he thought the opportunity a good one to make a show of his eagerness in giving her a welcome, and for this purpose he had taken with him his train of huntsmen to meet the Princess on her road. The next morning, he ordered an elk to be started ; and bringing Zeneyda with him, who rode on horseback as well as the best horseman, he returned once more to the tower of the boiling cauldron, which he had no little difficulty in finding ; but the fire was extinguished, and the sorceress was no longer there. The little negro alone remained,

picking up hot coals to put into the old woman's feet-warmer. Childerie politely asked him where Dame Albofède could be found, forgetting that he was dumb, and the blackamoor, equally forgetful of the same fact, answered that she was gone to take up her residence on one of the islands of the Seine, situated not far from thence, at about half a league from that which she formerly inhabited. Childeric failed not to repair thither the next day. He experienced some difficulty at first in discovering the place he was in search of, nor would he ever have succeeded in finding it, had he not observed a crow busily engaged knocking down walnuts from a tree, and carrying them one after the other to the hollow of an old willow planted at the head of a small island. This proceeding astonished him; he hired a fisherman's boat to ferry him across the river, and drew near the willow, which was the largest he had ever seen. It was rotten with age. The Prince, on looking into the hollow of the trunk, was surprised to see something glittering at the bottom; it was Albofède's right eye; she was emerging from her subterraneous habitation through this kind of breathing-hole. She told him that she was on the point of paying him a visit to give him warning of a sudden irruption of the Huns into his territories. "They are within three days' march from hence," she said, "in the forest of Hircymia; you have not a moment to lose ere you assemble your troops. If you can anticipate their attack you will be the victor. With regard to the Princess Zeneyda, she would not be safe were you to leave her at Troyes; nor must you expose her to the chances of war. I will take care of her during your absence. Send her hither with her train of attendants; I am about to build a dwelling for her worthy of her rank. During the summer I inhabit a crystal apartment in the bed of the river; but as the Princess might suffer there from the damp, I shall construct a palace for her upon land. Accordingly

ere night-fall the most elegant pavilion was prepared for the reception of Zeneyda, in which the richness of the furniture corresponded with the magnificence of the architecture. A bridge of the same kind as those subsequently invented by Palladio formed a passage from the island to the bank of the river, and though it was of marble, it turned round upon its axis directly any one had passed over it. Zeneyda had, according to the commands of Albofiède, brought her suite with her, that is to say, her ladies and her blind minstrel. Every one was well treated ; a dainty supper was served up in the drawing-room ; the blind man was served at a table apart, with viands of a more solid character, nor was Roquinet forgotten, for he had an excellent dish of minced meat. The sorceress had found an infallible way to avoid the trouble of idle and impertinent servants. All the work was done by automata, and she had brought mechanics to a point of refinement and perfection which, in the present day, is entirely unknown. The candelabra, for instance, were formed by golden figures representing nymphs, each of them supporting three tapers, which they lit, extinguished, or supplied afresh, when it became necessary. In each chimney corner were two bronze figures, whose duty was to stir and blow the fire, or cover it up whenever it was desired. The beds were ornamented with Cupids who, if the occupant showed any disposition to wakefulness, gently rocked him asleep, while the Genii who supported the crown of the bed fanned the air with their wings to keep it cool and drive away the gnats. The carriages were drawn by pasteboard horses, light and swift as the wind, never taking fright, and so gentle that a woman or a child might drive them ; by which means they could dispense with that invariably drunken and coarse race of people—coachmen. In short, were I to enumerate in detail all the inventions of the Enchantress, I should never have done. But, while every justice is done to her genius, it must be added that her heart was as

black as her mind was subtle and inventive. Zeneyda was odious to her because she was a descendant of Clodio who had given her offence. It was not, therefore, to afford her an asylum that she had offered Childeric to take care of her during his absence, but in order to get her into her power, and to revenge herself on the unfortunate Princess for the wrongs she had suffered from her grandfather. On entering her apartment, however, she was so struck with the noble and gracious mien of the Prince of Armenia, who was playing on his lyre for the amusement of the ladies, that she forgot her vindictive projects. Her extreme penetration soon discovered that Tigranus was not blind, and that he was a lover in disguise; but nothing appeared to indicate an understanding between him and the Princess. To ascertain the truth, she unexpectedly entered the apartment of the Prince of Armenia at the moment when he was preparing to get into bed and had taken off his bandage. If his engaging figure and distinguished air had made a favourable impression before on the Enchantress, now that she beheld his fine eyes and his face beaming with all its beauty, she was no longer mistress of herself, and her heart, which for the last two or three centuries had been withered within her, once more felt all the fire of youth. She had intended to intimidate him in order to obtain his secret, and had entered the room with a menacing air; but her manner was suddenly softened.

"Young man," she said, "what can have persuaded you to play so dangerous a part? Are you not aware of the perils to which you are exposed? If Childeric discovers your rash projects, there is no frightful punishment which his cruelty will not inflict on you."

Tigranus was more confused at being discovered than he was intimidated by Albofliède's discourse.

"Madam," he replied, "I am an unfortunate exile, forced

to fly from my native country and conceal myself from all eyes. This alone is the occasion of my disguise——”

The Enchantress here interrupted him, and said with dignity, “It is not upon such a person as I, who am possessed of all the secrets of nature and of art, that you can expect to impose. I am aware of the passion you madly cherish, but I feel an interest in you and will grant you my protection. In the meantime you have it in your power to abate the violence of this attachment by means which are worthy of you—study and application. Return thanks to heaven that you have found a person who has both the disposition and the means of improving and developing the gifts which nature has bestowed on you. Here is a little book containing the elements of magic, study it, and to-morrow I will come and explain that which you may have found it difficult to understand.”

So saying she left him, after giving him a gentle tap on his shoulder, as a token of friendship. When she was gone, Tigranus examined the book which she had left him; it was a quarto volume bound in serpent's skin, and filled with hieroglyphics and cabalistic figures. The Prince of Armenia, however, was blest with so ready a comprehension, that in two days he had acquired sufficient skill to construct an automaton, which was not without merits. It was a little Chinese Mandarin, that could unravel the most entangled skeins of silk; all that was required was to place the skein on his two hands, when he immediately gave a nod with his head in token of assent, and would never stop till all the silk was reeled off. Tigranus presented it to Zeneyda, who received it with gratitude. Albofiède beheld with no less pleasure than astonishment the rapid progress of her pupil. By the sixth lesson he could read the magical characters off hand, and was within but very little of being able to turn himself into a man-wolf. It was certain that he devoted himself to the study of magic

with all the application he was master of, not that he was desirous of becoming a wizard, that kind of persons enjoying a very equivocal reputation, and for one who performs good actions, there are a hundred who misuse their knowledge to the torment of mankind. His object was to acquire skill in the composition of love-philters, that he might exert their power upon his mistress. He dared not ask this secret of the Enchantress, but trusted that he should be able to discover it when he was thoroughly versed in the principles of the art. Albofide, who was aware of his attachment, could not learn, however, whether it was requited; in order to gain this information she sought to insinuate herself into the confidence of the granddaughter of Clodio; but all that she had been able to discover was, that the crown of Childeric offered no attractions to the young Princess, who saw her marriage deferred with pleasure. This was enough to inspire her with the most violent jealousy. But as she was extremely hypocritical, Zeneyda did not perceive it, and on the contrary thought she might safely apply to her, to obtain some means by which Childeric should be made to feel an insurmountable aversion for their intended union. "I feel," she said, "a distaste for the pomp and grandeur of a Court; an agreeable retreat such as this would please me far more, and, but that I fear that you would deem me troublesome, I should entreat that you would allow me to stay here for the rest of my life, with those whom I have brought hither."

"Well," replied the old beldame, "you shall have your wish, and I will search my books through, to see if I can discover a recipe for a potion to inspire hatred, which I shall make both you and the King swallow." She immediately ordered her large cauldron to be got ready, into which she threw two dozen vipers, eight serpents, and three snakes, fifty toads, a pound of tiger's gall, the liver of a mad hyæna,

together with other venomous ingredients ; thereupon having uttered words which made her one hair stand on end, she had the fire kindled beneath it. As you may imagine, these preparations were by no means with a view of serving Zeneyda ; her intentions being of a totally opposite nature. She still hesitated, however, whether or not to include Tigranus in her vengeance. Ere she made up her mind, she determined to seek a final explanation with him.

"I see with pleasure," she said, "that you profit by my lessons, and that you will soon attain the high destiny which is in store for you, but to follow with success the study of the higher branches of science, it is necessary to throw off the yoke of all sensual passion ; the heart must be entirely free in order that the mind may communicate with the celestial spirits, who disdain all converse with the gross nature of men absorbed in terrestrial objects. Solitude furnishes the only true and real means of avoiding all that might turn you aside from these sublime speculations. I will, therefore, convey you to a lofty tower belonging to me, situated in the neighbouring forest. There for some years you will be secluded from all association with men." "Alas !" whispered Tigranus to himself, "I shall regret no man. Let but Zeneyda be left me, and I am indifferent to all else." "After this period of seclusion," continued Albofiède, "you will possess the same control over the elements which you will have acquired over your passions ; and in future if you conceive any attachment, it will no longer be based on the fragile and evanescent advantages of personal beauty, but upon the respect and esteem inspired in you by profound skill in the great art of magic. It is then that I shall be able (and as she spoke this her features assumed an expression of coquetry) to make you an offer of my hand without the fear of a refusal. You shudder, Prince, at this proposal ! Know then that this skin

which, perhaps, fills you with repugnance, was once of the lily's hue ; I hope one day to restore it to its former brilliancy ; and, but that decency forbids me, I could show you the happy effects of a plaster of my composition upon a portion of my breast." The Prince of Armenia entreated her not to give herself the trouble of showing him the result of this experiment, assuring her that he did not doubt for a moment the truth of what she said : " but," he added, " we cannot dispose of our hearts, and mine belongs to Zeneyda ; be pleased, therefore, to be contented with my respectful gratitude."

" I shall put it to the proof," said the cruel Enchantress, with a most ominous contortion of her features. " Follow me." Whereupon she conducted him to the fatal cauldron, which by that time was bubbling and boiling with its horrible contents.

" This vessel," she said, " contains a philter which inspires hatred : take a cupful of it, pronounce the name of Zeneyda as you drink it, and you will be cured."

" Rather would I pronounce that of the odious Albofiède ! " exclaimed the Prince, revolted at the proposal.

The Enchantress, furious that she should be thus despised, struck the cauldron with her wand. An enormous scorpion immediately emerged from it, and seizing the Prince of Armenia in his claws, carried him into the cauldron, nor could the courage of the most valorous Prince in the world save him from his fate.

Such was the deplorable end of the young heir to a powerful monarchy, who, had he lived, would have been the idol of his subjects. If the narrative of his misfortunes be enough to excite pity in every feeling breast, imagine how much the tender-hearted Zeneyda must have suffered.

The nymph was here interrupted by the entrance of a large blue-bottle into the room, followed by two flies. The blue-bottle settled himself quite unceremonioualy on the ear of the

nymph, who was immediately silent, that she might listen to him. She shortly informed me that Zeneyda was coming, and begged that I would wait for her arrival. I consented with pleasure, requesting, however, that I might hear the conclusion of the pitiful story which had been told me.

Well, said the nymph, listen, then, to the horrible catastrophe. The cruel Albofiède, when she had thus caused the young Prince of Armenia to perish, thought her vengeance incomplete until his unfortunate mistress had shared his fate. Accordingly she invited her to inspect the effects of the charm, and bade her draw near the cauldron, as the philter of hatred was prepared, and she must drink a cup of it. Scooping up a cupful of the horrible beverage, she handed it to the Princess, who took it with a trembling hand, while a secret repugnance drove the cup from her lips. But as the infernal witch was enjoying the diabolical triumph of seeing her rival swallow a cup of broth in which her lover had been stewed, Roquinst suddenly rushed in, barking and looking for his master. Running round the cauldron, he approached the Princess, overturned the cup, and with a doleful cry leaped into the cauldron. Zeneyda shuddered with horror as the suspicion of her misfortune flashed upon her, when she beheld the devotion of the heroic poodle. Albofiède was about to force her to drain the fatal cup, when suddenly there arose a great noise, the earth trembled and was rent asunder, and the tutelary deity of the river emerged from the crevice, and addressing Albofiède in a terrible tone, said, "Never will I permit such atrocities to be perpetrated in any place over which my power extends. I lent you this island, and I must now purify it." He was armed with a glittering sword, and seizing the sorceress by her one hair, "I know," he said, "that it cannot be torn out; but the head on which it grows can be cut off;" and so saying, with a blow of his sabre he brought it to the ground. Zeneyda had fainted away, and

he ordered us to conduct her to these regions which you now behold, and to wait upon her with the utmost care and attention. The charms of her lovely person had made the deepest impression on the heart of the deity ; but he respected her misfortunes, and refrained from making any proposals at which her modesty might have taken offence. This delicacy of conduct, as rare among gods as it is among men, was sensibly felt by the hapless Princess, and inspired her with a sincere regard for the high-minded river, but not love. The Prince of Armenia had exhausted all the tenderness and affection of which her nature was susceptible, and henceforth her soul was inaccessible to the tender passion. It was to no purpose, therefore, that the God of the Seine spent his sighs at the bottom of his deep caverns. He neglected to regulate the course of the stream, and it flowed in every direction, inundating the meadows, forming islands where none existed before, and sapping the foundations of bridges, nor did its caprices spare even mills and dykes. Such a state of things could not last. The god felt it himself, and petitioned the Fates that he might be allowed to resign his situation in favour of Zeneyda. She was accordingly raised to the dignity of a Naiad of the first class ; and we, subordinate nymphs, attend upon her with a degree of zeal daily augmented by her kindness, but which can never succeed in effacing the recollection of her misfortunes. As to her predecessor, the poor River God, he gradually melted away on his road from Troyes to Paris ; and it has been remarked that, from that time, the inhabitants of the capital in the habit of drinking his waters have become even still more inclined to love than formerly.

At the instant the nymph had concluded her story, by one of those extremely fortunate coincidences which now only occur in romances, the Goddess of the Seine entered the apartment.

" Well," she said, " now you are acquainted with my misfortunes. Say, can I be sufficiently pitied ? "

" Madam," I replied, " never have I heard of so deplorable an adventure ;—the broth of —"

" I entreat you," said she, " do not continue, or I shall die from the excess of my grief. It were better that I should inform you to what you are indebted for the favour of being admitted into this palace, into which no mortal has ever before penetrated. You bear a striking resemblance to the unfortunate Prince of Armenia, and I desired to learn from your own lips if you were not related to that illustrious personage. If you indeed belong to that noble race, you can rely upon my favours, and should you weary of the world I will exercise all my power to render this watery abode agreeable to you."

I answered that my family papers were in a very disorderly state, and that, in a space of ten or twelve hundred years, the rats and the lawyers had probably devoured a few bundles of them. " But Princess," I added, " why should you trouble yourself about old titles, when you possess a certain proof of my relationship with the house of Armenia, in the impression produced on me by your charms, and which is as deep as that which Tigranus received from them."

This piece of gallantry caused a slight smile to wander over the lips of the fair mourner. There has yet been discovered no pain sufficiently excruciating to counterbalance the effects produced upon ladies by being told that they are beloved, and of all modes of consolation it is perhaps the most efficacious. However this may be, Zeneyda, persuaded that we were related, said, affectionately, " Cousin, you must at least make a short stay with me. This palace is a mere barrack compared to my habitual residence, which is situated beneath the river; but don't be alarmed ; these young ladies," she said, pointing to the nymphs, " will make you undergo a slight preparation

which will enable you to follow me." As I was making a bow, in token of acquiescence, I felt my face inundated with drops of water, which the three nymphs, the fair, the dark, and the golden-haired one, were amusing themselves throwing at me from a bowl of mother-o'-pearl. I put up with the joke good-humouredly enough, but I thought it was going too far when a couple of Cupids joined the party with their golden watering-pots. I was soaked through, and insisted on making my escape from this aquatic abode in spite of all the efforts of Zeneyda and her nymphs to detain me ; my struggles were so violent that I awoke and found myself lying in the middle of a meadow on the banks of the Seine, steeped in water. A violent shower, which still continued, had surprised me in the midst of my dream. I rubbed my eyes and returned with all haste to the terrace at St. Germain. It is certainly possible to be as wet as I was, but utterly impossible to be more so. My clothes were wet through, and my peruke was in a really deplorable condition. As for myself, I caught a violent cold, and am still coughing while I write this.

Thus in the realms of fairy land,
I love 'mid elves and sprites to roam,
And ever leave the joyous band
With downcast heart to hie me home.
Too well I know a dreary host
Of bores and bored in dulness vieing,
Of upstarts not too proud to boast,
And envious fools true worth decrying,
Alas ! is all the social cheer
Reality can offer here.
Where truth in guise so sad is seen,
It serves but to engender spleen,
And wisdom from all grave concerns
In self despite to folly turns.

THE HISTORY OF MAY-FLOWER.

NIGHT THE LAST.

THE beautiful and unfortunate Schhérazade had, with the conclusion of this history, terminated the nine hundred and ninety-ninth night since her marriage ; and the Sultan, faithful to his prudent custom, had risen before daybreak, in order to betake himself to his council before the arrival of his ministers.

As soon as he had departed, Dinarzade, who although somewhat hasty, was the best-hearted creature in the world, thus addressed the Sultana :—

“ You may say what you will, sister, but you must be the greatest ninny in the universe,—with all due deference be it said to your rank, your learning, and your wonderful memory,—to have taken it into your head to unite yourself with a dolt of an emperor, who for the last two years that you have been telling him stories has done nothing but listen to them ; stories, too, that but for your lively and pleasant manner of telling them, would positively be nothing at all. Nevertheless, here you are at the end of your budget, and consequently very near the end of your days. The story which you have just related to him is such a wretched affair that he did nothing but yawn, and I with him, during the whole time it lasted. My patience in keeping you company so long, must afford a satisfactory proof of my regard for you, but I can endure no more, and you will allow me to absent myself to-night, as I must give audience to the Prince of Trebizond, who, at least if he find my company dull, will not cut off my head for allowing the night to pass without telling him a story. I advise you, therefore, to amuse your simpleton of a husband with that of the Pyramid and the

Golden Horse, which is worth all those you have as yet told him together. I shall not fail to be here the next day, and as soon as the Sultan is in bed, before you get in yourself, throw yourself down on your knees, feign to be suddenly indisposed, and humbly entreat the brute that he may be pleased to allow me to entertain him in your place for the last time ; be particular to insist on the last time, as you only demand this favour on condition that if the story I shall tell him be not more extraordinary than all you have related, he may have you strangled at once, the first thing in the morning ; but, on the other hand, if he interrupt me before the end of my story, he is to grant you your life. I think he will not refuse these conditions ; for you know he is so attentive, whatever trash one is telling him, that he has never interrupted you once in any of your stories."

This compact would have alarmed any one else ; but the marvellous Schéhérazade, whom the study of philosophy had taught to despise death, at once consented to it.

Accordingly, during the last of the thousand nights, she amused her lord with the story of the Golden Horse and the Pyramid ; and on that which followed, when the Sultan had got into bed, and she had obtained permission for her sister to speak, on the terms we have already mentioned, the prudent Dinarzade, having made the Prince put his signature to them, commenced her story as follows :—

" Most illustrious, most religious, and most merciful Emperor, who, hearkening only to the laws of justice and to the dictates of your natural benevolence, do strangle, in hatred of your first wife, all her successors, and who, nobly incensed at the number of negroes and muleteers employed in the service of that Empress of blessed memory, sacrifice so many innocent beauties to the memory of one guilty one,—what would you say, sire,—you who have the reputation of the most discreet of princes, and whose ministers are the most impenetrable of all ministers,—what would you say to your slave, if she could inform you of what this day has taken place in your council ? "

" Pooh-pooh ! " said the Sultan.

" Precisely so," continued Dinarzade, " and that you shall shortly see by this story ; listen attentively, and above all, remember your promise."

STORY OF MAY-FLOWER.

Two thousand four hundred and fifty-three miles hence is a country called Cashmere, the most beautiful of all beautiful countries. Here once reigned a Caliph ; this Caliph had a daughter, and this daughter a face ; but many a time did people wish that she had never had one. Up to the age of fifteen, it was just possible to endure her beauty ; but after that, nobody could stand it at all. Her mouth was the loveliest in the world ; her nose a complete master-piece ; and as for her complexion it made the lilies of Cashmere, which are much whiter than ours, look quite dirty ; and beside the delicate carnation of her cheeks the new-blown rose appeared like a presumptuous little minx.

Her forehead was unique of its kind, both for form and brilliancy ; its whiteness was relieved by a peak formed by her hair, which was much blacker and much more brilliant than jet, and it was on this account that she was called " Radiant." The outline of her face seemed to have been expressly made to contain such an assemblage of marvels ; but her eyes spoilt all.

Nobody had ever been able to look at them long enough to tell their colour, for if any one encountered her glance it was as though he had been struck by lightning.

When she was eight years old the Caliph, her father, was accustomed to have her brought before him, that he might contemplate himself in his handiwork, and also to afford his courtiers an opportunity of uttering a quantity of trash in praise of her young charms ; for even at that early stage the candles used to be put out in the middle of the night, nor was any other light wanted than that which her little eyes gave out. All this, however, was mere child's play ; but matters grew beyond a joke when her eyes obtained their full degree of lustre.

One by one, all the youth, the prime and flower of the court, perished miserably from their effects ; and not a day passed but two or three of your conceited jackanapes who think, when they see a pair of fine eyes, they have but to ogle them, were laid in the earth. For when it was a man who gazed on

her, the fire of her eyes shot suddenly to the bottom of his heart, and in less than twenty-four hours he expired, gently murmuring her name, and humbly thanking those beautiful eyes for having dealt him so sweet and glorious a death.

With the fair sex matters took a different turn. Those who came under her glances at some distance only, escaped with a dimness and confusion of sight from which they never recovered to the end of their lives ; while those who were in immediate attendance upon her person paid a somewhat dearer price for the distinction : her ladies of the wardrobe, four maids of honour, and an old lady, their governess, were stone blind.

The grandees of the kingdom, who beheld the hope of their families extinguished in the blaze of this fatal effulgence, supplicated the Caliph to employ some remedy against a calamity which deprived their daughters of light and their sons of life.

Accordingly, the Caliph summoned together his council, to consult as to what was to be done. The Caliph's seneschal presided over the assembly, the Caliph's seneschal being the most consummate dunderhead who was ever known to preside over that or any other assembly. It was indeed for this and no other quality that the Caliph had selected him his prime minister.

On the matter coming into discussion, opinions were divided.

Some were for putting Radiant into a convent, maintaining that there would be no great harm in a score or so of ancient nuns, and their abbess, losing their sight for the benefit of the state ; others urged that a state-warrant should be issued summoning her eyes to close forthwith until further command ; while some proposed to put her eyes out so skilfully that she should feel no pain, and offered themselves to furnish the secret.

The Caliph, who loved his daughter dearly, found none of these proposals to his taste. The seneschal perceived this : he had been crying his eyes out for an hour past, and commencing his harangue before he had wiped his eyes,—

“I was mourning, sire,” said he, “the death of the count, my unfortunate son, a gentleman wearing a sword, but which availed him nothing against the glances of the princess ; he was buried yesterday ; so let us say no more about it. To-day your majesty requires my services, and I must sink the father in the seneschal.

" My grief has not prevented me from listening to the advice which has been offered to you, and I trust the company will not be offended if I declare what has hitherto been proposed to be altogether absurd. Here is mine.

" I have had for some time past in my service an equerry ; I neither know where he comes from, nor who he is ; but this I know well, that since I have had him my household affairs have ceased to trouble me ; he is a devil and knows everything ; and although I have the honour to be your seneschal, I am but a fool to him ; a fact of which my wife informs me every day of my life.

" Now if your majesty would be graciously pleased to consult him upon so difficult a matter as the present, I am persuaded the result would be to your satisfaction."

" Most willingly, worthy seneschal," said the Caliph, " will I do so, especially as I am curious to behold a man who is cleverer than yourself."

He was accordingly summoned to attend ; but he sent word that he would not come until the Princess with her beautiful eyes were safely locked up.

" There, sire ! " said the seneschal, " was I not right, your Highness ? "

" Ho ! ho ! " said the Caliph, " he is a sharp fellow indeed ; but let him come, he shall not see my daughter."

He was not long coming ; he was neither well nor ill looking, but there was something agreeable in his manners, and a certain air of acuteness in his features.

" Speak to him boldly, your Highness," said the seneschal ; " he understands all manner of languages." The Caliph who could only talk his own, and that not very elegantly, after pausing some time, trying to find something very clever to say, —

" What 's your name, friend ? " said he, —

" Pooh-pooh ! " replied the other.

" Pooh-pooh ! " repeated the Caliph.

" Pooh-pooh ! " echoed the council.

" Pooh-pooh ! " said the seneschal.

" I asked you friend," said the Caliph, " to tell me your name."

" I know you did, sire," was the answer.

" Well ? " said the Caliph.

" Pooh-pooh ! " said the other, making a profound bow.

" And why do you call yourself Pooh-pooh ? "

" Because it is not my name."

" How so," said the Caliph.

" Because I left my own name to take to this, and so I call myself Pooh-pooh, though it is not my name."

" Nothing can be plainer than that," said the Caliph, " and yet it would have taken me more than a month to find it out."

" Well, Pooh-pooh, what is to be done with our daughter."

" What you please," your Highness.

" So ! " said the Caliph, " and what then ? "

" What ever your Highness pleases," still replied Pooh-pooh.

" Well, to cut the matter short," said the Caliph, " my seneschal, here, invited me to consult you respecting the unfortunate property she possesses of killing or blinding all that look upon her."

" Sire," said Pooh-pooh,—

Blame, not on her, but on the gods be laid,
Who with such beauty have endow'd the maid.

But if it be a misfortune to be blest with a beautiful pair of eyes, this, in my humble opinion, is what must be done to remedy it. The magician Serena knows all the secrets of nature ; send her a trifling present of a million or two, and if she can give you no remedy for the eyes of the Princess, why you may make up your mind that there is none. Meanwhile I should be inclined to try the effect of a head-dress, made entirely of handsome green stuff, in which the Princess's hair should be confined ; for I am very much mistaken if its brilliancy, joined to that of her eyes, is not partly the cause that her glances are so dangerous ; and in order to raise all obstacles, I myself, if your Majesty approve of it, will consult the magician on your behalf, as I am acquainted with the place of her abode."

The Caliph very strongly approved of it. Pooh-pooh was intrusted with a purse full of brilliant diamonds, and half a bushel of large pearls for Serena, and started off forthwith in spite of the seneschal's wife, who was sadly affected at parting with him.

He was a whole month on his journey, during which time Radiant's eyes did more mischief than ever. She had never been able to make up her mind to the green head-dress ; not but that it would certainly have somewhat diminished the brightness of her eyes, but it had communicated a slight tint to her complexion, which so exasperated her that she tore it off and threw it at the head of her lady of the wardrobe, and ever since, her eyes had become more terrible than ever.

The Caliph was having prayers offered up and daily processions made, in the hopes that Heaven might be moved either to look down with pity upon his poor people, or prevent his daughter from looking at them, when Pooh-pooh returned ; and thus did he address the Caliph and his council assembled :—

“ Sire, the magician Serena presents her compliments to your Highness, and is very much obliged to you for your present, which she cannot accept. She possesses the secret, she says, of rendering the Princess's eyes as perfectly harmless as are those of your Majesty, and that without injuring their brightness; but you must furnish her with four things.”

“ Four ! ” said the Caliph ; “ four hundred, if she will.”

“ Softly, sire, so please you,” said Pooh-pooh. “ The first of these things is the portrait of Radiant, the second May-flower, the next the Luminous Hat, and the last, Jingle, the mare.”

“ What the devil is all that ? ” cried the Caliph.

“ Sire, with your permission I will inform you. Serena has a sister who is called Dentata, and who is almost as learned as herself ; but as her skill is only available for evil purposes she is merely a sorceress, whereas the other is an honest, well-intentioned magician. The sorceress carried off Serena's daughter when quite a child, and now that she is grown up, torments her night and day to make her marry a little monster of a son of hers. She it is who is called May-flower, and is in the power of the sorceress. Besides this, she possesses a hat with so many diamonds in it, and those diamonds are so wonderfully bright, that they throw out as much light as the sun. Over and above all this she has also a mare, with a little golden bell at the end of every hair on her body, and they give out such harmonious sounds that whenever the mare moves, the most ravishing music is heard. These, sire, are the four things demanded of you by Serena, who cautions you at the same time

that whoever shall undertake to carry them off from Dentata, it will be almost impossible for him not to fall into her hands, and once there no power on earth can get him out again."

The Caliph and his council all fell a-crying at finding the conditions so hard, they could hope for no remedy against their misfortunes. Pooh-pooh was quite affected at the scene, and addressing himself to the Caliph,—

"Sire," said he, "I am acquainted with a man who could furnish you with the first item of the demand, if he chose to undertake it."

"What!" said the Caliph, "paint my daughter! And who is the madman bold enough to undertake an impossibility?"

"Pooh-pooh," replied the other.

"Pooh-pooh!" said the Caliph.

"Pooh-pooh!" said the seneschal and all the council; and "Pooh-pooh!" echoed all the little raggamuffins playing about the palace.

"Sire," said the seneschal, "if he undertakes it, he is sure to do it."

"And suppose he should," said the Caliph, "who is to undertake the rest?"

"I," said the rash Pooh-pooh; "but upon condition, that when my name happens to come up in the course of conversation, people shall leave it unmolested, and not bandy it about from one to the other like so many echoes; and that when the Princess shall be in the condition you wish, she shall be free to choose whom she likes for a husband."

The Caliph pledged his word to it, and the seneschal, who was fond of work, made out the letters patent for him.

Every one was puzzled to know how he would set about painting a face which nobody could look upon without dying. The mystery was soon cleared up. He was a man who had travelled a great deal, and among the curious observations he had made on the manners and customs of each country, he found that in the country of eclipses the inhabitants, by tinging a piece of glass with some dark colour, were enabled to look upon the sun with impunity. Adopting this idea, he made himself a pair of spectacles of the darkest green, and, having tried them on the sun at full noon, proceeded straight to Radiant with the necessary implements for painting.

Although he did not make it his profession, no one excelled him in this art. His taste in all respects was of the most refined delicacy, and no one was a better judge of beauty; nevertheless that of the Princess Radiant did not make such inroads in his heart as he had imagined. Her shape was less perfect than her face, and this for some time preserved him; but he was obliged to give in at last, and then it was that he put forth all his wit to please her. She was not insensible to the praises he bestowed upon her beauty, while, at the same time, under pretext of beguiling her weariness during an occupation which generally oppresses even the most vivacious spirits, he told a number of pleasant stories about his travels, which amused her so much that she would willingly have listened to them all her life. Nor did the absence of any great personal recommendations on his part prevent his wit from producing the same effects as if he had been the handsomest man in the world. So she fell in love with him, and was quite distressed that the picture was so soon finished, but she was much more so when he was obliged to set off upon such a perilous adventure as that which he had undertaken.

When he was going she told him that, in exposing himself for her, he was working for himself, for that if he succeeded she would then be allowed to choose a husband for herself, but if he failed she was determined never to choose one at all. For in those days, when a fair lady felt that she had lost her heart, she never hesitated a moment to declare her passion, and princesses were just as eager in doing so as anybody else. Pooh-pooh threw himself down at her feet at least a dozen times, in order to prove to her that he was transported beyond himself; but in his own mind he was quite astonished to find his heart so little affected by the happiness which had befallen him, for he could not but feel that he did not love her so much as he pretended.

The portrait of Radiant was the admiration of the whole court, and so life-like was the painting that it was difficult to sustain her looks, although only in a picture. Pooh-pooh discovered to the Caliph the secret he had employed in order to paint his daughter, and left him his spectacles that he might have the pleasure of seeing her now and then. He recommended him at the same time not to use them too often, for

fear of accidents ; but the Caliph neglected his advice, and repented it.

In order to facilitate the execution of his enterprise, he was offered money and even troops, but he refused both, and, commanding himself only to fortune, set out on his journey with no other assistance than his own courage and ingenuity.

So long as he was still within the confines of Cashmere, nothing but a succession of pleasures attended his path. Flowers sprang up beneath his steps ; peaches and figs fell into his mouth whenever he lifted up his head ; melons of the rarest quality presented themselves on every side, and a perpetual spring imparted a gentle warmth to the air and serenity to the sky. Whenever he felt inclined for repose, a vast orange-grove, stretching beside a purling stream, immediately offered its cool and delicious shade, while the birds lulled him to sleep with the most enchanting melodies ; for there was not a single nightingale in the whole kingdom that was not a thorough musician, and not even a hedge-sparrow but could sing at sight. But, as soon as he had crossed the mountains by which this delightful country is bounded on every side, he met with nothing but wild deserts, and forests full of animals so fierce that tigers and leopards were pet lambs in comparison.

Nevertheless it was impossible to reach the abode of Dentata without crossing the forests ; and as though these horrid brutes had been aware of his design, instead of taking the trouble of coming to meet him, they quietly dispersed themselves in different directions. Three hydras, ten rhinoceroses, and some half dozen griffins posted themselves directly in his path. He was well versed in the art of war ; so that, after reconnoitring the sort of aspect they presented, he was able to form a tolerably correct notion of their intentions ; and, finding the match was not an equal one, he had recourse to stratagem.

He waited quietly till nightfall, keeping a careful watch round about his camp ; and at about the second watch, he made up a faggot of all the driest sticks he could collect, and having set fire to it with a flint lock, stuck it on the top of a long pole, and marched straight upon the enemy. He felt he was not sufficiently in love to invoke the name of the fair Radiant ; and so, without commanding himself to his divinity, the

doughty Pooh-pooh rushed headlong into the most perilous adventure that was ever attempted.

There is not a wild beast living that can stand against a good blaze of fire ; and as soon as these caught sight of the burning faggot, they were considerably shaken in their resolution ; perceiving which, he set up a loud halloo, and having dispersed them, found himself out of the wood just as the day was breaking.

Although sadly in want of rest, he was afraid to trust himself to repose in the neighbourhood of so dangerous a place. The sun was rising, and its first beams caused him to discover something shining in the midst of a small path ; this path he followed, and having walked for a long time in the direction of the object, he found that it always appeared exactly at the same distance as before. Mortified and weary, he was fain at last to sit down ; but no sooner was he on the grass, than what he had beheld rose up into the air, and presently the most beautiful bird ever seen came and perched upon a bush within four steps of him. The feathers of his wings were gold and azure, and the rest of his body white and fire-colour ; his beak and talons were of gold, and, except that he was rather larger, his appearance resembled that of a parrot.

Pooh-pooh examined him attentively, and was delighted with his beauty. Urged by something more than curiosity, he would have approached it, but feared that it would fly away.

The parrot, however, seemed to entertain no such intentions ; for, after searching for some time in the bush, he drew from it a little bag, which he laid on the ground, and after very dexterously untying it, took from it a pinch or two of salt, which he scattered with his feet, pecking it up afterwards with his beak.

"Polly ! my sweetheart," said Pooh-pooh, "don't eat that, it will do you harm." But the parrot burst out into a loud fit of laughter, looking at him, however, very gravely. "Gracious heaven!" said the other, "what an amiable parrot ! But what am I saying ? a parrot!—a phoenix I should say."

"Pooh-pooh!" said the parrot ; and away he flew.

When he was out of sight, Pooh-pooh picked up the bag of salt, and continued his journey along the path which he had taken. He was in hopes that, as he was carrying off its food,

the bird might come back to him. "I can't understand," said he, "what can have frightened it away. But how is it that whenever the name of Pooh-pooh is pronounced, even the very birds cannot help immediately repeating it? This one, however, repeated it of himself. What induced me to take such a name and abandon my own? Was it on account of the adventure of the magpies? But no one would believe me if I were to tell the story all my life, and I scarcely know whether to believe it myself who saw it with my own eyes."

He continued walking the greater part of the day through a barren and uninhabited country, diverting himself with a thousand different thoughts, in which Radiant was frequently mixed up. But she did not occupy his thoughts to the extent of becoming the subject of those long and agreeable reveries in which those who are passionately enamoured delight to lose themselves, building up splendid castles in the air where the imagination is much more magnificently accommodated than ever were common sense and plodding reason.

Night was approaching, and he was exhausted with hunger and fatigue, when, looking about him on every side, he caught sight of a miserable hut ensconced in the midst of bushes and bramblewood. There he found an old man and his wife, together with every prospect of a wretched repast and a comfortless lodging; but his mind being intent on other things than luxury and good cheer, he determined to pass the night there. He was well received, for he gave them more money than would have sufficed to buy up the whole house. The son of the old people made his appearance soon after, as dilapidated a young gentleman as was ever seen.

He brought home a couple of half-starved goats, who joined the company, there being no other apartment for them. From these poor people Pooh-pooh obtained all the light he could relative to the enterprise upon which he was bound. As soon as daylight appeared, having changed dresses with the son, he covered over half his face with a large plaster, bought the goats, and not forgetting to take his bag of salt, set out on his expedition. He turned his steps towards the place from whence, or thereabout, he was told the palace of the sorceress could be descried; but his hosts advised him not to venture there unless his business was very particular.

He had not proceeded far before he heard a kind of harmony, which became more and more melodious the nearer he approached. He was not long guessing what was the cause of it ; and still driving the goats before him, while he carefully observed all that was in the neighbourhood, he halted in a little grove, through which a pleasant rivulet pursued its course.

The vicinage of so dangerous a place, and the approach of a perilous and doubtful adventure, inspired him with some reflections ; save these reflections, and some little emotion, they inspired him with nothing else—neither fear, nor repentance.

He never ceased to ejaculate—

“ He who dares not achieve should not dare to begin,
And though from the struggle I never should rise,
There's a glory in striving fair Radiant to win—
Glory even in losing so lovely a prize.”

And again :

“ Though death may destroy all the fond hopes I cherish,
In a nobler endeavour no mortal could perish.”

While he was thus fortifying himself with recollections of operatic heroism, he beheld advancing towards him a person who engrossed his whole attention. From the freshness of her looks, she might have been taken for the dawn of a summer's day ; from her shape, for the most perfectly formed of all the goddesses—and from her grace, for all the graces embodied in one person.

She was clad with extreme simplicity ; but the unstudied elegance of her appearance, enhanced by an air of cleanliness, so adorned her, in spite of the meanness of her attire, that she appeared to him to be some princess in disguise.

Three times did he look at her, from the top of her head to the soles of her feet, as she was advancing towards the rivulet ; and three times did he swear, in a confidential whisper to himself, that he had never beheld feet of so perfect a mould, nor so many charms as were collected in the form they sustained.

He turned away, pretending to be looking after his goats, while she filled a pitcher, which she had brought with her, sat down by the side of the rivulet, clasped her hands, and

fell to gazing, with a mournful air, at the water flowing at her feet.

He gradually drew near ; while, after heaving a few sighs, she exclaimed : "No ! never was there so unhappy a creature ! Alas !" she continued, "since I am assured that my wretched destiny can never alter, but to become worse, how is it I am still contented to live ?" After giving vent to this reflection, she paused awhile, but it was only to shed a flood of tears. A moment after : "Happy birds," said she, "who have nothing to fear—save the elements and man—and other birds who wage a continual war against you—you, at least, in spite of all your alarms—have still the enjoyment of liberty ; and you are not condemned to have eternally before your eyes the most frightful object in the world."

At the conclusion of this speech, she shed tears anew ; and after washing her hands and face in the stream, took up her pitcher and departed.

Pooh-pooh had attentively examined her without her perceiving him ; he had been charmed with her person, and, from her demeanour, he judged her to be possessed of natural parts, a gentle temper, a sincere heart, and yet withal a sufficiently proud spirit. This was finding out a great many things in a very short time ; but, nevertheless, he was not mistaken ; nor was he far wrong in his conjecture as to who she was.

He spent the whole day in the grove doing just what he pleased ; and when night came on, he left his goats there, and pushed forward over the plain to reconnoitre.

The further he went, the less did he know whither he was going : and he might have wandered a long time in this manner, had not a sudden burst of light discovered to his sight a large flat-built house, at about two hundred yards from him. On the light disappearing, he found no great difficulty in groping his way until he reached the house. Not doubting but it was that which the sorceress inhabited, and judging that it might not be quite convenient to present himself at the door, he clambered upon the roof with as little noise as possible.

The house was only thatched ; and after listening some time without hearing anything, he pulled apart the thatching as gently as he could, and through the opening beheld the horrible

Dentata, mumbling a parcel of barbarous words, and throwing herbs and roots into a large cauldron which was on the fire. She stirred this mess round and round with a long tooth that stuck out of her mouth, and was at least two yards long. When she had well turned all these drugs about for some time, she threw in three toads and three bats, and began to repeat :

" By my magic, hat, and mare ;
By my malice ; by my ire ;—
This wizard charm I now prepare—
'Tis to unfeather my love so fair,
That all my powers must conspire."

" Her lover ! Ye gods !" cried Pooh-pooh ; " he must be one of those monsters who tried to stop me in the forest." Meanwhile the sorceress every now and then dipped a finger into the cauldron, with a nail almost as long as her tooth ; this she did in order to taste the delightful compound, and see how the charm proceeded.

In a corner of the fire-place was a little monster, so ugly and so deformed, that he was a more frightful figure even than his mother. Before this monster, the fair one whom Pooh-pooh had beheld in the little grove, was kneeling, and with her snowy arms and ivory hands, was washing a pair of the filthiest and most disgusting feet that were ever seen.

Pooh-pooh could see that she was in despair at having such a task to perform, nor was he less moved himself. Dentata perceiving that the poor girl was crying, raised her long tooth, and looking at her askew :

" Wretch !" she exclaimed, " do you dare make such a fuss at waiting upon one who in two days is to be your husband, instead of thanking Heaven, as you ought, that you are about to belong to the son of Dentata, and to possess such a husband."

Pooh-pooh was unable to repress a shudder at these words. The sorceress raised her head at the noise, while he scrambled down with all haste, lest he should be surprised, and made for the grove as well as he could, where he spent the rest of the night, thinking of what he had seen, and turning over in his mind what course he should take.

The following morning brought the fair maiden to the rivulet again. She returned with all her charms, with all her sorrow, and with something else in the bargain ; namely, a bundle of filthy clothes, and a quantity of very foul linen, which she began to wash in the rivulet, crying all the while, as though her heart would break.

Her appearance a second time by the side of the same stream increased his compassion for her, and made him feel that he should ere long stand in need of all hers. She was bent forward over the stream while washing the filthy rags, and seemed as though from sheer despair she would have thrown herself into it, had there been water enough to drown her. Her position gave Pooh-pooh an opportunity of gazing on the loveliest bosom in the world ; he thanked Heaven for the spectacle, but without flattering himself that it would ever be anything more to him.

He thought it time, however, to discover himself ; but before he spoke to her, he was desirous of attracting her attention, and taking a flute from his pocket, he began to play an air with considerable feeling. To give a notion of his skill, no more need be said than that he played the flute twice as well as he painted.

She turned her eyes towards him, and was surprised to find his personal appearance accord so little with his manner of playing. As soon as he saw she was listening, he made a feint to follow his goats, which had got away to a distance.

"No," said she, when he had ceased, "the harmony of Jingle herself is not more pleasing, How happy," she continued, "is that poor man whose life is spent in tending goats. Alas ! vulgar and low-bred as he is, I wish, with all my heart, I were that poor wretch ! But what can make him come to so detestable a place, when it depends only upon his will to lead his scanty flock elsewhere ? What object can he have in approaching the abode of Dentata ? "

"He comes to deliver you from your captivity, lovely May-flower," said he, suddenly drawing near.

She was so surprised at his action, that she had certainly fainted away had he given her time to do so.

"Yes !" said he, "I am resolved to deliver you, or perish in the attempt."

"Alas!" said she, gazing upon him attentively, "poor lad! thou mightest indeed perish, but thou canst never save me; since to accomplish that it would be necessary to release me from the slavery in which I am, and that is impossible. Thou seest me employed in the most disgusting occupation in the world, and yet I would willingly pass my life at it, had I not something to fear, which is more frightful still. I am about to become the wife of Dentata's son."

"I know all," answered Pooh-pooh, "and will save you from your fate."

She gazed with increased curiosity on one who spoke with so much confidence, and who appeared to be ignorant of nothing. He who had hitherto only enjoyed the pleasure of seeing her, and had not yet experienced that of being himself the object of her attention, now felt that he preferred it to all the most delicious sensations he had ever known before. He removed the plaster which covered his face, that he might not appear so disfigured in her eyes; how far he was right in doing so I cannot say. If she was not very much struck by his face, however, she was beginning to accustom herself to his way of talking. He told her, that not being what he appeared to be, he had undertaken to carry off herself, the luminous hat, and the mare Jingle; that he had undertaken all this for the sake of a princess who was considered the wonder of the world, and whom he was already beginning to forget. "And how could any one do otherwise than forget her," he cried, "who had once beheld the charming May-flower! She—she alone, shall henceforth be the object of all my undertakings!"

She appeared to take no offence at this declaration, nor did she seem particularly shocked at the sacrifice it announced; and during the short time they were able to remain together, Pooh-pooh was fully confirmed in the opinion he had formed of her mind and of her sentiments. He entreated her to trust entirely to him, as to all that concerned the execution of his enterprise, adding that all he required of her was that she should consent to whatever might be proposed by one who would prefer dying three hundred thousand deaths rather than give her the slightest offence.

He learned from her the precise situation of Jingle's stable,

together with the fact, that no trouble was taken to fasten her in, as there was not much likelihood, it was imagined, that any one would steal a mare who could not make the least movement without being heard, and whose music became much louder the moment she was out of the stable. This was enough for him, and as she could stay no longer, they parted, May-flower fixing her eyes upon him all the while she could.

As soon as she was out of sight, he earnestly commended himself to his good fortune, which had never abandoned him ; to his ingenuity, of which he was more than ever in need, and to all the strength of his courage. He felt that he was inspired by something more than adroitness and good sense. He fancied that it was by his new flame ; but in reality it was quite another thing. Fully determined, however, to obey every new impulse of his soul, he fell to cuffing a number of small urchins who had brought some bird-lime to catch the poor little birds with ; he took away their bird-lime, lest they should use it again when his back was turned ; and when night came on, he bent his steps towards the stable of Jingle, carrying with him his little bag of salt, and the bird-lime which he had taken from the little boys. A notable preparation to start with, on such an enterprise as he was bent upon, and fine weapons to combat the power of a sorceress, whom he was going to rob of all her treasures !

A melodious sound guided him directly to the mare Jingle : he reached her just as she was preparing to lie down for the night. She was the handsomest, the gentlest, and the most tractable beast in the world. He patted her gently with his hand, giving her at the same time a polite greeting. She was so touched at his proceeding that she would have laid down her life for him, for she was accustomed to see no one but the son of the sorceress, who gave her provender, and who frequently maltreated her ; besides which he was so horribly ugly that she would often have preferred going without food, rather than see him.

When he saw her so well disposed towards him, he filled all the little bells one after the other with dung, and covered them over with the bird-lime, which he had brought with him, to keep them securely stopped. As soon as this was done,

Jingle got up of her own accord, to see that there was nothing more about her that could make a noise.

Pooh-pooh repeated his caresses, saddled her, fitted on her bridle, and leaving her in the stable, proceeded towards the abode of Dentata. As soon as he reached it, he took up his post on the roof with the same precaution as he had done on the previous night. He had all along been puzzled to know, how it was he should always have the bag of salt in his hand, wherever he went, but now he soon found out the reason. On looking through the same hole, he beheld very nearly the same spectacle as before, with the exception that poor May-flower appeared even more wretched ; for, the first time, she had only been washing the feet of Dentillo, but now the little monster, after offering to do the agreeable to her, on the strength of their approaching nuptials, was grunting and grumbling like a hog at the repulse his familiarities met with.

The sorceress forced her to sit down by the fire, while Dentillo, stretched out by her side, laid his head on her knee and fell asleep.

The wretched May-flower dared not express all the horror he inspired in her ; but she was unable to restrain her tears, although she had to conceal them from the sorceress.

Poop-pooh was deeply moved at all her sorrows, while Dentata, still intent upon the manufacture of her charms, was scraping up the bottom of the cauldron with her long tooth. From time to time she threw in some fresh ingredient, repeating the same incantation as on the previous night. Pooh-pooh, who thought he might as well furnish his something to the mess, emptied his bag of salt into it, through the opening in the roof. The addition was unperceived by the sorceress until she came to taste it as she had done before. Starting with horror and surprise, she dipped her finger in once more, tasted it again, and finding that the charm was spoilt by an ingredient apparently hostile to its efficacy, she gave a yell so horrible, that ten thousand screech-owls, all screaming together, could scarcely have equalled it.

The sorceress immediately snatched the cauldron off the fire, and dealt so sound a box on the ear of the innocent May-flower, that she was nearly felled to the ground, and

Dentillo, waking up, lent her another for daring to disturb his rest.

When Pooh-pooh beheld this, it was as though he had received fifty boxes on his own ear, and had as many daggers thrust into his heart. His rage got the better of his prudence, and he was about to avenge her at the cost of his life, when Dentata, after praising her son for his magnanimous resentment, ordered him to fetch some water from the rivulet. "Go, darling," said she, "and that nasty wretch shall take my hat to light you. I should have sent her alone, but that the hat has no virtue unless it be worn by a maid, and she who carries it must not carry anything else ; go, my son, take the pitcher, and don't be afraid of ghosts ; they dare not approach when the hat is shining ; go, and I promise you, you shall marry the minx, in spite of her airs, directly you return."

"With all my heart," said Pooh-pooh, coming down from the roof, "provided it be only when he returns." He took care not to say this very loud however. As soon as he reached the ground he posted off to take up his position between the house and the rivulet. Directly he had done so, he beheld all the neighbourhood lit up as though it was broad day. The first object that met his eyes was the lovely May-flower, who appeared to him so dazzling with beauty, in spite of the luminous hat, that it seemed as though its light was borrowed from her. The little monster who accompanied her could scarcely drag himself along, under the weight of the empty pitcher ; and, as though he were not frightful enough with his horrible hump-back, the little wretch limped like a lame dog, and was so stunted, that he tried in vain to take his lovely mistress by the arm ; do all he would, he could reach no higher than her pocket. So, clutching tightly hold of this, he hobbled and scuttled beside her the best way he could ; and, Heaven knows, she tried hard enough to get rid of him, taking the longest strides, and her heart beat so with mingled fear and hope, that she was ready to drop by the time she had reached the place where Poop-pooh was waiting for her. She started the moment she saw him, and directly after, blushed and then turned pale. I know not whether he took notice of her agitation, or if he did, how he accounted for it ; but after begging her not to be alarmed, he seized Dentillo, muffled his head up in a

handkerchief, and hoisting him upon his shoulders, as one might do a poodle, gave his arm to May-flower, and made straight for the stable, with all the haste he could.

Here he found Jingle, in the same state as when he left her. He then informed May-flower, in a few words, of his design; and so lost was she in amazement, that she signified her assent without hearing a word of what he had said.

"I am so frightened," she said, "but my fears are no longer for myself alone, and they are more than I can bear. You have done already so much, that I must believe all you tell me. So, let us fly from hence with all diligence, since flight alone can save us. But how do you mean to dispose of that little monster?"

"I should flay him alive," said he, "as a return for the fright the thoughts of becoming his wife caused you, and for the box on the ear you received from him, but that the sorceress would not be so afflicted at such an easy death, as she will be at that which I have in store for him."

The kind-hearted May-flower, who would hear of no cruelties, save those of hard-hearted beauties towards their sighing lovers, was about to beg that mercy might be shown the little wretch.

"No," said Pooh-pooh, "don't be alarmed. He shall get no other harm than being quite at his ease, while we are exposed to fatigue. May I request, indeed, that you will grant him some slight mark of your favour, as a tender memorial of you, now that he has lost all hope of obtaining your hand. Permit him to wear your head-dress, for instance, until he shall have the honour of seeing you again."

May-flower was at a loss to discover his meaning, but thought the time was rather ill-chosen for jesting. As for Dentillo, he appeared even uglier than before accoutred in his new head-dress. He had heard himself threatened with being flayed alive, and when he found that it all ended in his wearing his mistress's head-dress, he looked upon himself as saved. But Pooh-pooh set to work, binding him hands and feet, and stuffing enough hay into his mouth to prevent his crying out, covered his whole body with it, so that nothing more of him could be seen than the back of his head, which, ornamented as it was, made a very decent appearance.

This little ceremony over, he patted Jingle on the back,

mounted her, seated May-flower in front of him, made a start, and turned his back on the palace of the sorceress. Though Jingle was as swift as the wind, her paces were as gentle as the motion of a boat, and Pooh-pooh throwing the bridle over her neck, availed himself of all her speed for the space of an hour; at the end of which, judging they had travelled about fifty leagues, he thought they had gone far enough to allow the mare to take a little breath.

He had indeed reason to be happy, after bringing to an end so terrible an adventure, and delivering from all her wretchedness one whom he was beginning to love. Rescued from all apprehensions, he now breathed freely, while without danger of giving offence he held the object of his love clasped in his arms. Happy situation for a man who had commenced an enterprise, urged on only by glory, to have completed it thus under the gentle guidance of love! His only fear now was that he might fail to please his mistress; for he was too well acquainted with the extent of his own merits to flatter himself with the hope that he could win her by his personal attractions; and he was quite alive to the fact, that except his wit and the ardour of his affection, he had little else to recommend him. Every time that he looked at May-flower he felt his passion for her increase, nor was he likely to diminish it by encircling the beauty with his arms, albeit never so respectfully.

"Fair May-flower," said he, perceiving that she trembled still, "you have nothing more to fear from the tyranny of Dentata, nor do I conceive that you have any cause to be apprehensive by the side of one whose sentiments towards you are animated with the strictest sense of propriety. I am fully sensible of your merits, for I dare assert that no one breathing is better able to judge of them, but I dare not say that they have found their way to the very bottom of my heart, although it would indeed be extraordinary were it otherwise than so. I have been obliged to leave my own country for reasons of a peculiar nature, and when I quitted it I had no fixed object or design in view; I started in the world without very well knowing of what I was in search; but now I feel but too well assured that it was yourself; may I request that you will kindly listen to the tale I have to tell?"

May-flower, at a loss how to answer so many things at once,

gently reclined her head against him as though to rest herself. Well pleased with this mode of replying, and without waiting for any other, he commenced as follows :

" I am the son of a petty prince whose territories are rather of the smallest; but, on the other hand, his subjects are rich, contented and faithful.

" I had a brother, (Heaven knows what has become of him,) but we were not more than six years old, when my father took us aside, and addressing us as though we had had our reason : ' My children,' said he, ' as you are twins, the right of primogeniture cannot decide the point as to which of you is to succeed me. My territories, however, are too small to admit of being divided; one of you, therefore, must give up his pretensions in favour of the other, and in order that he who shall yield to the other may not repent his resolution, I have two gifts to grant you, the least of which may make your fortune in another place. These gifts are wit and beauty; but, as they cannot go together, let each choose that which he likes the best.'

" We answered both together; I asked for wit and my brother for beauty.

" My father embraced us and said, that in the course of time each should have what he had chosen. My brother's name was Phœnix, mine Bulfinch; and if we had had other brothers, I doubt not but they would have been called, one Blackbird, the other Starling, Nightingale, Canary, and so on; for one of the weaknesses of the good prince was a mania for birds; the other was insisting that his children should speak of him as " My Lord father." This he could never obtain from me; but Phœnix gave him more than he bargained for. This was the reason, perhaps, that his wish was fulfilled more exactly than mine, for, at the age of eighteen, nothing more perfectly beautiful than he was had ever been seen in our sex. In my case, however, although I was paid many compliments on my pretty wit, I held it to be no more than is said of every child that comes into the world, when fathers and mothers go about importuning every one they meet, with repeating the sharp replies of their offspring; and I gave myself credit for no more wit than just enough to discover that I had none at all.

" Although our inclinations were vastly different, never was union so perfect as that of my brother with myself. I employed

my time reading every book I could lay hands on, good or bad; and, as I soon learned to distinguish the latter from the former, I was reduced to so small a number, that I was near lamenting the niceness of my taste, by which my reading was so considerably curtailed in its extent. Phœnix, on the other hand, had no thought for anything but how he should adorn his person so as to produce the most dazzling effect.

" My father at last died, and appeared as happy as a man can be who is breathing his last, that he was leaving us in such perfect agreement. No sooner was he laid in the earth, than, for the first time, we began to be of different minds, and to show a disposition to controversy ; but the subject of our dispute, which was a very obstinate one, was, which of us should suffer the other to give up his rights. Phœnix insisted, till he was black in the face, that I, being better able to govern, was most deserving of the succession ; while he, with his person and appearance, thank Heaven, wherever he might be, could never want for anything. In vain did I furnish no less cogent reasons why he should take possession of our little principality ; I could make no impression upon him. At last, after a long debate, we both agreed that we should set out the same day, and each on his side seek his fortune, on condition that whichever of us first succeeded in establishing himself, should endeavour to inform the other, that he might return and take possession of our common inheritance. We left the country to be governed in our absence by faithful ministers, and Phœnix having taken the field with all his charms, I, on my side, set out with what little good sense had fallen to my share.

" We started, each taking a different road. The first adventure which befel me on that which I had taken, is sufficiently remarkable, although it was not one of the perilous and startling kind which abound in the history of heroes. I had travelled through a great number of provinces without encountering anything upon which I could establish the hope of raising myself to fortune. I did not fail to instruct myself, wherever I discovered anything worthy of my attention ; I learned secrets of every description ; and remarked all that was worthy of observation in each country, but nothing of all this could satisfy my curiosity.

" Arriving at last in the kingdom of Circassia, celebrated for the beauty of its inhabitants, I was not a little astonished to

find that I had travelled from one end of it to the other, without meeting one beauty sufficiently striking to excite even the commonest admiration. I assigned the cause of this to the change which had recently taken place in the government of the kingdom ; and I conjectured that the disturbances arising thereupon, had dispersed all the beauties ; who, from what I had heard of their abundance, I imagined would arrest me at every step.

" I was walking one day beside a stream which flowed along the skirts of a vast plain. Beyond the stream stood a house of a sufficiently stately appearance. I was seized with a curiosity to examine it more closely ; and on reaching it I beheld a mansion, the exterior of which led me to believe that it was the residence of some prince. The interior, however, presented but a sombre appearance, and the inhabitants seemed gloomy and sad ; nevertheless, I beheld more beauties there than in all the rest of Circassia, but never had I seen any so wild and timid. Those who perceived me at a distance, fled at my approach, and those who were unable to avoid me, instead of replying to the civilities, with which I addressed them, did not even turn their heads towards me. Here, said I, are figures wanting only speech to present a most natural resemblance to beautiful women. I passed through, I cannot tell how many galleries, without meeting in the whole of this vast mansion one being whose appearance did not betray as much gloom as it inspired ; when I was suddenly startled by the sound of loud bursts of laughter proceeding from an apartment separated from the galleries. I was pleased to find that all in the place did not participate in the sadness with which it was beginning to oppress me. On entering the apartments, I found in the room from which the laughter had proceeded, four magpies seated round a table playing at cards. Far from being startled by my appearance, they addressed a few civilities to me, and went on with their game ; of which I, who know every game in the universe, could make neither head nor tail. An old crow of comely appearance sat by, making knots and looking at the game.

" I confess I was surprised enough at so strange and novel a spectacle, and was at a loss to understand the meaning of this enchantment. They shuffled, cut, and dealt as though they

had never done anything else all their lives. While my attention was fixed on their proceedings one of the magpies, who had been sorting her cards a long time, threw them all down in a transport of delight, and screamed out Pooh-pooh ! with all its might.

" The rest answered in the same way, and even the crow, who was out of the game, cried Pooh-pooh ! This was the signal for fresh bursts of laughter, so loud and piercing, that it was impossible to endure it.

" I left the apartment of the magpies of the gloomy palace, and three days after quitted the kingdom. It was about that time that the report began to travel of the Princess Radiant's beauty ; and so marvellous were the things related of it, that I refused to believe them. Regardless of the danger to which, I was told, I should be exposed by looking at her, I was resolved to ascertain, with my own eyes, whether all that was said of her was indeed true.

" The happy kingdom of Circassia had long inspired me with the desire of visiting it, from the reports I had heard concerning its beauty. The desire of changing my name, seized me on a sudden ; I knew not whether I was led to do so by the common practice of adventurers in adopting some disguise, or whether the name of Bulfinch had not, in my opinion, a sufficiently imposing sound, for one who was desirous that his name should reach the ears of the greatest beauty in the world. It matters not why, but change it I did ; and my head being still full of the adventure of the magpies, I adopted the name of Pooh-pooh." " Pooh-pooh ?" said May-flower. " The same," continued he ; " and the most singular thing about it, is that it seems impossible for any one to hear it without immediately feeling a desire to repeat it, as you have just done."

" At the entrance of the kingdom of Circassia, by the road which I had taken, the learned and accomplished Serena has established her enchanted dwelling. The desire of becoming acquainted with a person whose command over supernatural powers, acquired by long and deep study, had rendered her the most illustrious of mortals, had had as much to do in inducing me to visit Circassia, as all the wonders I had heard concerning the beauty of Radiant ; but the extreme difficulty of reaching her had almost overcome my curiosity.

Of the thousands who had entertained the same desire, only a very few had met with success. The situation of her place of abode could only be roughly indicated ; and it was in vain that any attempt was made to reach it. Unless favoured especially by fortune, or rather by the consent of the enchantress herself, it was impossible for any one to find it. I was lucky enough to be admitted into her presence, and from what I could gather, I had only deserved this favour by the extreme desire which had inflamed me, of paying my respects to a genius so far removed above all others.

"I shall not weary you with a minute description of an abode, the beauties of which are almost beyond imagination. All I shall say of it is that that particular place is to all Cashmere, what the delightful kingdom of Cashmere is to the rest of the world. The short time I was permitted to remain in her society, was, undoubtedly, of much more value to me than the gift of wit, which my father imagined he had bequeathed me. I was led to believe that the admiration and respect which I had shown towards her, had gained me her protection ; on my taking leave of her, indeed, she gave me every hope of it, and I departed with the firm resolution to show myself as deserving of her favour as possible.

"On arriving where the Caliph held his court, I was careful not to show myself. I soon discovered of what stuff the genius of the good caliph was made, and I became acquainted with the character of his prime minister. As he had not the capabilities which those who govern usually have, or ought to have, neither had he their presumption, and much less their abrupt manners. He was the most affable minister that ever existed. His wife, though less simple-minded, was even more gracious and condescending. I entered her service in the character of equerry, and soon perceived that my lady did not look on me with any aversion.

"What kind of beauty was she ?" asked May-flower.

"Of the kind which those who have it, choose to make it," replied Pooh-pooh, and continued as follows :—"As the judgment of the seneschal, her husband, was not the most refined, I was at no great pains to give him a high notion of my abilities, and this led to my being employed to seek

a remedy for the misfortunes which were daily caused by the eyes of the fair Princess."

Pooh-pooh then related how he had contrived to take her likeness.

" You looked at her very often, then ? " said May-flower.

" Yes," replied he, " just as long and as often as I liked, and that without the slightest danger, as I have just told you."

" Did you find her so wonderfully beautiful as she was reported ? " continued May-flower.

" Aye, and a thousand times more beautiful," was the reply.

" It were indeed needless to ask, if you did not immediately fall desperately in love with her ; but tell me the truth."

Pooh-pooh concealed nothing of what had passed between him and the Princess, not even the promise she had made to marry him, if he should succeed in his enterprise.

May-flower no sooner heard this, than she put aside his hands, with which he held her embraced, and drew herself up, instead of leaning upon him, as she had done before. Pooh-pooh thought he could understand what this implied, and pursued his tale as though nothing had occurred. " I know not," said he, " under what fortunate influence the first inclinations of the Princess were disposed in my favour, but I was well assured that I had deserved no such distinction, either by my good looks, or, still less, by the sentiments which possessed my heart ; for I have since discovered, but too plainly, that the love with which I imagined myself inspired for her, was, at the utmost, nothing more than simple admiration of her beauty. When I was separated from her, the image she had left in my mind grew every instant fainter and fainter, and from the moment I beheld you, I ceased entirely to think of her."

He was silent, and the lovely May-flower, without uttering a word, gently fell back into her former position, and laid her hands upon his, with which he once more encircled her.

So far had they got, when the day began to dawn, and Pooh-pooh having relieved May-flower of the luminous hat, which she had never ceased wearing while it continued dark, they were now guided only by the feeble light of the approaching day. Revived by the freshness of the morning, the flowers

raised their drooping heads ; and the precious tears it shed, bathed the meadows with moisture, and beat down the dust upon the parched roads.

But just as the beauteous harbinger of day was throwing open the gates of the east to the horses of the sun, Jingle began to neigh. May-flower started with alarm, and, trembling from head to foot, exclaimed, we are lost, the sorceress pursues us.

Pooh-pooh turned round and beheld the terrible Dentata mounted on a fiery unicorn, and leading a brace of tigers, the smallest of which stood much higher than Jingle.

Pooh-pooh sought to dissipate the fears of May-flower, by telling her that the mare would go so fast, they should soon lose sight of the sorceress and her equipage, and thereupon prepared to push on at full gallop ; but Jingle suddenly stopped short. In vain did he press her sides with his heels, and use every endeavour to urge her forward : she remained immovable.

May-flower, seeing the sorceress within fifty steps of them, began to faint away. Pooh-pooh protested in vain, that so long as a drop of blood was in his veins she should never fall into her clutches nor those of her tigers : she was not to be recovered by any such means.

Dentata continued to approach, and Pooh-pooh, at his wits' end what to do next, bethought him to try what gentle means might do, and smoothing the mare down with his hand—

"What ! my pretty Jingle !" said he, "wouldst thou yield thy fair mistress into the hands of that frightful old witch who is pursuing her ? Wert thou so gracious at first, only to betray us in the end ? "

But for all this appeal to her better feelings, not a peg did she stir ; and the sorceress was now within twenty steps of them, when Jingle twitched her left ear thrice. In a moment he had thrust his finger into it, and finding a small pebble there, he threw it over his left shoulder. At the same instant a wall sprang up from the ground, which separated them from the sorceress. It was not more than sixty feet high ; but it was so long, that there was no seeing where it began or where it left off.

May-flower breathed again, Pooh-pooh thanked his stars, and Jingle was off like a flash of lightning.

They had already lost sight of the new-made wall, and Pooh-pooh, considering May-flower to be now out of all danger, was about to address her with some tender, and perhaps not inelegant speech, when Jingle, in the midst of her rapid flight, suddenly made a dead halt. Pooh-pooh turned his head, and beheld the eternal Dentata once more in hot pursuit of them.

"What!" he cried, "is there no wall can stand against this old witch, with her unicorn, her tigers, her long tooth, and her dreadful griffin?"

While he was making these reflections, all May-flower's apprehensions returned to her with renewed violence, while the mare, more restive than before, seemed nailed to the earth. Not a whit discouraged, Pooh-pooh fell to harangue Jingle with even more touching eloquence than on the previous occasion.

"Alas!" he said, "virtuous Jingle, too clearly do I perceive that the sorceress has cast a spell upon you, and that when you are in her sight she is able to deprive you of all power of motion. If it were not so, knowing what a generous heart is yours, I am assured that you would rather perish than fail to save your young mistress, the lovely May-flower; but as your apparent dejection informs me that you can no longer be of any assistance to us, let me beg one favour of you, which is, that you will save the charming May-flower. As soon as I am dismounted I will advance to meet the sorceress and her tigers; fortune may perhaps favour my daring. While Dentata's eyes are turned upon me, do you fly at your utmost speed with my beloved May-flower. Farewell! honest Jingle; save your gentle mistress,—desert her not, I conjure you; and if we never meet again, bid her sometimes remember one, than whom no being in the world loved her more dearly."

At the conclusion of this speech he was about to alight; but May-flower, pressing his hand to her, sought to detain him. As for poor Jingle, she was so affected that she fell a-crying like one that has lost her wits; her sobs were so pitous, that they were enough to melt the hardest rocks, and big tear-drops the size of a walnut rolled from her beautiful eyes to the ground. But, while all this useless lamentation was going on, the sorceress was gaining more and more upon them. At this

juncture were they, when Jingle twitched her right ear thrice, and thrice again.

This time all that Pooh-pooh found in it was a drop of water hanging to his finger's end, which he threw over his right shoulder. No sooner had the drop of water reached the ground than it became a river, and presently grew to such a size, that it looked like an arm of the sea. Its waters were more impetuous than a torrent, and turned their course in a direction to meet Dentata, but with such overwhelming rapidity, that she and her unicorn and her tigers were well nigh all carried off in the stream.

It was capital sport to May-flower and Pooh-pooh watching how the water rushed along, pursuing her faster and faster as she pressed her unicorn forward to avoid it. As soon as she was out of sight, Jingle expressed her joy with a bound that had nearly thrown May-flower from her seat. Whereupon Pooh-pooh pressed her still more tightly to him, under pretext of giving her additional support; for, though he had been no better prepared than she for this sudden transport, being a good horseman, his seat had been but little disturbed by it.

They were now for the second time rescued from the terrors of the accursed Dentata. Pooh-pooh was in hopes that this was the last alarm she would cause them; and Jingle, who seemed to participate in the tranquillity to which all their previous anxieties had given place, bounded onward with inconceivable lightness. Pooh-pooh, seeing that she was galloping on unconcernedly enough, bethought him, after some time, that it might be as well to stop her, and communicate his intentions, as he was uncertain whether or not the road she was taking would lead them where he wished to arrive. Accordingly, dropping the bridle upon her neck—

“Jingle,” said he, “not but I know that with you we can never lose our way—I think it prudent, however, to inform you that we wish to go to the kingdom of Cashmere. It is bounded on one side by mountains and precipices; on that side is situated Serena’s dwelling; lead us thither by that route, I pray you.”

“And why would you go to Cashmere?” said May-flower; “is it not the country of Radiant?”

“It is the country of her father,” replied Pooh-pooh; “and

it is to her father that I promised to bring the spoils of Dentata, such as Serena demanded them of him."

"What!" she rejoined, somewhat agitated; "and did you not tell me, that although you had undertaken this dangerous enterprise for the sake of Radiant, your only thought in bringing it to an end had been the pleasure of accomplishing my deliverance? How weak of me," she continued, "to flatter myself one moment with the thought, that it was possible to forget the loveliest beauty in the world for such a creature as May-flower! Why did you say that which in your heart you did not think? Ah, Pooh-pooh!" she exclaimed, with tears in her eyes, "too plainly do I perceive that your only anxiety is to appear before those lovely eyes whose charms still hold you in their power, laden with the spoils which you had promised to lay at her feet, and leading poor May-flower in triumph to her throne. If you had not deceived me, you would not now seek to return to her; having found that which you seemed so fearful of losing, what should prevent you from taking me back to your own country? Why do you make me feel that there are sufferings greater even than those from which you have delivered me? Had you not flattered me with vain hopes, my heart, a stranger still to emotion, would not teach me to dread being sacrificed to Radiant as the greatest of all afflictions. Alas! she will love you too well without this new proof of your devotion."

Pooh-pooh was in despair at her affliction, and yet her fears conveyed a secret pleasure to his soul. Seeing that she still continued to weep:

"No, charming May-flower," said he, with transport, "I did not deceive you when I said that it was for you alone I exposed my life, and that you would see me perish at your feet ere I entertained the thought of sacrificing you to Radiant. The first moment I beheld you banished her from my heart, and every succeeding one has only established you more firmly in her place. Your words, so expressive of the delicacy and sincerity of your sentiments, have penetrated to the inmost recesses of my heart. A moment since I would have died to save you; how then should I now desire to live for another? Banish from your mind all fears as to my intentions, and allow me to prove myself a man of my word, which, if I were not,

I should be unworthy of your love. Know that we can only be secure while in the territory of Cashmere, and be sure that should the point ever be mooted, it is Radiant who will be sacrificed to May-flower, at the peril of a thousand lives."

We are soon persuaded by those we love, and give easy credit to that which we desire. Pooh-pooh had opened his heart with too natural and sincere a readiness to leave any doubts in May-flower's mind as to his intentions. As soon as he saw that she was tranquillised, he gave rein to Jingle, who turned suddenly to the right and began to gallop like the nimblest and swiftest creature on earth. In less than half an hour they came to the foot of a mountain apparently inaccessible, if indeed anything could be so to the lightness of Jingle. Pooh-pooh recognised it to be one of the mountains forming the boundary of the favoured country which they were seeking. Jingle clambered up the sides with as much ease as though she had been on level ground, and with no more fatigue to those she carried on her back. On reaching the summit, the air seemed laden with all the perfumes of Araby, and to whichever side they turned, as far as they could stretch their eyes, it was like a continual flower-bed, enriched with every variety of delightful tints. May-flower was glad to halt awhile and gaze on the scene before her; but while she was lost in contemplation of so many marvellous beauties, the demon of jealousy, who never loses a chance of thrusting himself wherever he can, disturbed the serenity of her reflections.

"What!" she said, "is Radiant heiress of all that I now behold! Radiant—herself more precious still than all these treasures, more brilliant than all the beauties Nature has here so plentifully shed—will present all this to the man whom she chooses for her husband! And can there be found one who would refuse her hand for that of May-flower! Ah, Pooh-pooh! if it indeed be true that your constancy, or rather your blindness, be proof against that which I fear so much, inspire me with some confidence, if it be possible, ere we descend into this enchanted land, or let me seek among the rocks and precipices we have just left a destiny more endurable than that of seeing you become the husband of Radiant."

Another might perhaps have exhibited impatience at the expression of misgivings which ought not to have so soon

returned after all that he had said to her. But May-flower was even more charming than she was loving and refined in her sensibility, and Pooh-pooh loved her passionately. So far from being wearied by them, these frequent alarms would have filled him with delight but for the distress which they occasioned one whom he loved. In order to cure her of them, "Lovely May-flower," he said, "I know but two ways of inspiring you with that confidence in my sincerity which you desire; one is to receive your hand here in the face of heaven and earth, and to unite from this moment forward my heart to yours for ever. I call to witness the invisible powers who now hear us, that I should deem myself far happier condemned to pass my life with you amidst the frightful places through which we have ascended hither, than in reigning with Radiant over the fortune-favoured regions whither we are about to descend. Ere we proceed further, then, I here offer you my heart and troth, and will conduct you at once to the little principality to which my brother by this time has perhaps returned; but as I have before told you, everywhere but in the kingdom of Cashmere we shall be exposed to the fury and pursuit of the cruel Dentata; and even should we avoid her, we could never secure ourselves against the just resentment of Serena, into whose hands I promised to deliver her daughter, the luminous hat, and the mare Jingle."

May-flower testified her surprise at this announcement by a slight movement. "Yes, beautiful May-flower," said he, "you are the daughter of the enchantress Serena, whose virtue, no less than her profound skill, render her more worthy of respect than if she occupied the highest possible rank. I should advise that we repair thither, where, laying at her feet the treasures which she demanded, and of which I have had the good fortune to despoil the sorceress, I might claim of her the most precious of them all, as a recompense for what I have done in obedience to her desires."

May-flower, somewhat confused with shame at the jealousy which she had betrayed, did not hesitate a moment in embracing this last proposal. They descended, accordingly, into those smiling and fertile plains on which they had gazed, and which presented a succession of fresh charms the nearer they approached them. For my part, I confess, I am not sorry that they have at last made up their minds one way or another,

for I was beginning to be afraid they would never leave the summit of the aforesaid mountain, where their effusions of sentiment, no less than their indecision, have rather wearied me, as I have no doubt they have your Serene Majesty.

Our lovers reached the foot of the mountain, while the ardour of the sun was still at its full, and although Jingle's paces were so easy that it was impossible to feel any fatigue from them, the fears and apprehensions to which May-flower had been a prey in the course of a night, during which she had never closed her eyes, had much exhausted her strength. Pooh-pooh, whose whole attention was absorbed in her, perceived this and alighted on the bank of a rivulet which was sheltered over on each side by a double row of orange trees. May-flower was no sooner seated here than she fell asleep, nor could she have done otherwise though never so inclined.

Pooh-pooh took off Jingle's bridle, that she might take some refreshment: but as he did not wish that she should wander too far, and was, nevertheless, desirous to let her have full liberty to graze wherever she felt inclined, he removed the muffling from her bells that he might hear her whithersoever she might stray. As soon as she felt that her bells were unmuffled, instead of wasting her time in grazing, she began to make such graceful and measured movements, that nothing could equal the harmony that resounded everywhere about her.

When Pooh-pooh had listened to it for some time, he fell to contemplating the beautiful May-flower. Her shape was the most perfect that was ever seen, her countenance—wrapt in the gentle slumber that weighed down her eye-lids—appeared beaming with every charm youth, health, and beauty can bestow. The enamoured Pooh-pooh was never weary of gazing, and while scanning such numerous charms in detail, he gave loose to all the tender suggestions of his imagination, remaining, however, within the bounds of the most scrupulous respect, notwithstanding the desire of overstepping them, which such a sight was fitted to raise.

In those days it was a thing utterly unknown for a lover to steal or surprise a favour from his mistress, when she had entrusted herself to his honour. He was content, therefore, to feed his eyes upon the marvels before him, and to give a

roving license to his fancy in respect of those that were hidden from him.

Meanwhile Jingle, gradually wandering further and further, continued to agitate her harmonious little bells in so ravishing a manner, that he selected some of the entirely original tunes which she thus composed, in order to make tender and amorous verses to them in praise of the sleeping May-flower. "Had I the power," such was the strain in which he addressed her, "to form a beauty such as my fancy would most delight in, I could imagine none more amiable or more attractive than that which I now behold, and, to captivate my heart, it would only be necessary to make a copy of May-flower."

Thus absorbed in the flights of his imagination, the noble Pooh-pooh felt no inclination for sleep. He thanked Heaven for the calm repose which his divinity was enjoying, and bethought him at the same time that when she had had sufficient sleep it was very probable that she might wish to eat. Turn which ever way one might, in this beautiful country, there was always wherewithal to be found to supply the most magnificent dessert in the world; not a tree nor a bush but would furnish enough and to boot; but fruit was but sorry fare to begin upon with a sharp appetite. Accordingly he laid down his tablets with the verses which he had been writing by the side of May-flower, and betook himself in search of Jingle, whose music he still heard though he could not see her. He would have found it difficult to give a reason why he should seek her, but he had taken it into his head that a creature which had already been of such signal service to them could not fail of finding means to satisfy all their necessities. He found her, as painters represent Orpheus, surrounded by every kind of walking and flying animal, attracted round her by the sweetness of her harmony. It cost their lives to a hazel-hen, two red partridges, and a pheasant, who were listening rather too attentively. He commenced dressing them for May-flower's supper, for though Bulfinch was a prince, Pooh-pooh could turn cook upon occasion, and none of the worst: need we say whether he now failed to do his best?

When he returned May-flower awoke, and was no sooner awake than her supper was served. She appeared far from insensible to his attention, nor were his services at this precise

juncture slighted with indifference. He related to her how chance had supplied him the means of regaling her with this small repast. She pitied the poor birds, whom their love of music had betrayed to an untimely end; and while she deplored their fate, availed herself of it with a good appetite. She wished to know how he had bestowed his time the while she had been sleeping. His tablets still lay beside her; he opened and presented them to her. She took them, and though blushing as she read, perused their contents several times over. She said she could not praise to the measure of their deserts, verses which praised her beyond hers;—he not failing to answer, with protestations, that they had not sufficiently praised her, nor, to take her charms to witness, how that they inspired him with a thousand times more than he could ever express in prose or rhyme.

“Pooh-pooh,” said the modest May-flower, “did I wish to grieve myself by indulging in reflections, which, nevertheless, are but too well founded, I should tell you that I am somewhat doubtful of your sincerity. I know myself, and I am fully aware that I possess no more attractions than are sufficient to secure me from absolute ugliness. But since you are blinded by a prejudice so favourable to me, I shall take care how I open your eyes to a thousand defects which I feel myself to possess, and which I devoutly wish I were without, that I might be worthy all you say, and all you would persuade me that you believe of me.”

Upon this subject of debate many tender and moving speeches were uttered on either side, wherewith the reader will, I doubt not, willingly dispense, it being a common custom, as I have many times observed, to skip over such conversations as often as they may occur, and so come with all expedition to the end of the tale.

Soon after they had finished their repast, night began to advance. May-flower, who had slept all the afternoon, would have willingly resumed her journey. The innocence of her own sentiments, the respect ever testified by her fellow-traveller, and the reconciling effect of habit, might have sufficed, it would seem, to set her mind at ease. But being extremely nice in her notions of propriety, she found it more suitable to them to travel together than to spend the night in each other's com-

pany. She was at a loss, however, how to communicate her feelings to Pooh-pooh, who, it was natural to suppose, would require sleep. Diving into her thoughts, he declared himself of the same opinion, and after assuring her that he could never be so unmanly as to sleep in her presence, they resumed their journey, hoping to reach the illustrious Serena's abode before daybreak.

Jingle's harmony surprised and delighted all they met on their road, and in the woods they had to traverse, the birds, deceived by the effulgence of the luminous hat, imagined, as they responded to the ringing of the golden bells, that they were saluting the approach of day. The village cocks fancied in like manner that they were heralding the morn, while the poor labourer, but just fallen asleep, woke up unrefreshed, to return to his work. But May-flower had only to remove the hat from her head, darkness reigned once more, and the good people turned round, and fell asleep again.

The day itself at last made its appearance, and Pooh-pooh promised his fair mistress that she should now shortly salute her illustrious mother ; but he was unable to keep his promise. As he had already twice visited the enchantress in her abode, he never doubted but he should easily reach it a third time. Two whole days, however, did he spend in unsuccessful efforts to discover it. He knew very well that he had passed a hundred times close to it, and he was at a loss to understand why Serena should become more inaccessible to him now than on the former occasions, especially as he was bringing back to her a daughter whom he naturally supposed she fondly cherished, and was, moreover, laden with all the other treasures which she had demanded. He was afraid May-flower might begin to suspect that he had deceived her on this point ; but the last proofs which he had given her of the sincerity of his affection had entirely cured her of all jealous apprehensions, and her only source of anxiety now was the fear of having incurred the anger of a mother whom she had never seen, and who, from all appearance, was unwilling to receive her.

They persisted, however, in their object, and the third day were about to commence their search anew, in every direction, without ever thinking, as Pooh-pooh had done on a previous occasion, of telling Jingle to take them to the Enchantress ;

for she had the power of reaching any place to which she was directed to go, nor could any enchantment prevent her. Pooh-pooh was not aware of this; but if he was inspired when he told her to go to Cashmere, he certainly was not so while wandering vainly about in search of Serena's abode.

It was while he was thus engaged, that a certain country newsmonger, who plumed himself on being in communication with the court, conveyed thither the intelligence of Pooh-pooh's arrival, and the caliph having thereupon dispatched courier after courier, commanding him forthwith to appear at court, he was under the necessity of obeying in spite of the alarm with which May-flower was again slightly seized, and the secret forebodings which threatened her heart with some misfortune. She did her utmost to conceal them in the presence of Pooh-pooh; and it required no moderate effort to appear tranquil, while approaching a city in which Radiant was awaiting the arrival of Pooh-pooh, to receive from him the remedy against so many evils, and perhaps offer him the recompense due to his achievements.

At last they arrived, and were received in triumph. Everywhere shouts resounded in the air, and carried the glory of Pooh-pooh to the skies. Not a soul doubted but the man who had thus so gloriously achieved an enterprise which he had undertaken for the public benefit, had brought them a remedy for all the evils under which they suffered, and it was high time something should be done. The good Caliph, after the departure of Pooh-pooh, having one day amused himself longer than was prudent in his daughter's company, had let his spectacles fall, and the lovely eyes that owed their light to him deprived his of theirs. The seneschal, a minister whose loyalty knew no bounds, expired from the effects of his grief at this occurrence; and his wife found a consolation for his loss in the favour to which she had suddenly risen with the princess; so powerful was her influence, that her mistress's glance was now never allowed to prove fatal but by her special advice.

These were already changes enough for the court to undergo, but they were not all. There had lately arrived there, as ill luck would have it, a Moorish woman, who governed the mind of the seneschal's widow by the charms of her wit, as the former did that of the princess by the charms of a parrot,

which had the power to preserve those who held it from the danger of her eyes.

On the arrival of Pooh-pooh, the council was assembled, and the Caliph, who had never at any time seen very clearly into his affairs, was now less than ever in a state to deal with them. He expressed a desire to embrace Pooh-pooh, whom he could not see. Some proposed that statues should be raised to him ; while others were of opinion that the honours of a great and a little triumph should be awarded him. The Caliph was ready to consent to everything that might do honour to such high deserts ; but Pooh-pooh modestly excused himself, saying :—

“ Ah, sire ; why should your highness and his most sage council trouble themselves ? In the present condition of affairs, that which I have done for you and for your kingdom calls for no such recompense ; nor is the time come to speak on this head until the service I have rendered shall produce its effects. I scarcely dare venture to remark that there was some degree of imprudence in the haste with which your couriers made me come hither : I was about to deliver into the hands of Serena that which I only carried off for her, and I should have brought you back the remedy so much desired ; instead of which, I must now retrace my steps thither, and you will have to wait my return.”

The Caliph very humbly begged his pardon, and laid the fault on his council. The council laid it on the orders of the princess, who held the reins of government since the blindness of her father, and was herself absolutely governed by the seneschal’s widow.

It was finally resolved that Pooh-pooh should set off the next morning with the treasures destined for the enchantress. The Caliph insisted that May-flower should pass the night in the house of the seneschal’s widow, that being the most honourable place next to his own palace. “ For,” said he to Pooh-pooh, “ you see by my own example that it is not wholesome to be too near Radiant.”

Pooh-pooh conducted her thither, and the Moorish woman was so prompt in her attentions, and acquitted herself with so much address, that she was quite delighted with her. Pooh-pooh refused even to approach the palace, so fearful was he of renewing her

fears. It was necessary, however, that he should leave May-flower, in order to prepare for his departure the next day.

So impatient was he to rejoin her, that he made but a short work of it. On his return, he found May-flower engaged in contemplating the portrait of Radiant, which he was to take with him on the morrow. He perceived that her admiration of this marvellous beauty was mingled with some show of discomfiture, and he said all that was necessary upon such an occasion to tranquillise her, nor was his assurance that he would take his departure without seeing the original, the least effective part of his discourse.

The Moorish woman was not long discovering the nature of their sentiments towards each other, nor was she at any pains to conceal her suspicions from the seneschal's widow, to whom she repaired, and who had already confided to her her tender regard for Pooh-pooh. But, before she could utter a word, the seneschal's widow began to inform her that her heart was in some measure torn by conflicting emotions; by affection on one side, and by glory on the other: that although she had more than once proved the truth of the saying, that love levels all distinctions, nevertheless, in the high position which she occupied, she had had great difficulty in making up her mind; but that, after mature deliberation, she had arrived at the conclusion that the widow of a seneschal might, without shame, marry her equerry, especially when the said equerry returned covered with glory.

It was at the conclusion of this harangue, that her confidant informed her she was reckoning without her host, in her intentions of conferring such an honour upon him; and thereupon laid before her a circumstantial account of her suspicions with respect to that youthful personage. The widow was immediately seized with a paroxysm of jealousy. Of all widows she was the most violent in her passion, and of all Moorish women her confidant was the blackest. Into such hands had the unfortunate May-flower fallen, as was soon made apparent.

Pooh-pooh, on coming the next day to carry her away, was surprised to see so great an alteration in her appearance. She was suffering the most excruciating pains which she endeavoured in vain to conceal from him. The excess of his grief soon discovered to her that he felt all their violence. Away

with all thoughts of his journey and of the good of the state ; his whole concern was now for the safety of May-flower, but perceiving from the increase of her sufferings that all his services were useless, he prepared to die with her.

The seneschal's widow, in contemplating the despair of her lover and the sufferings of her rival, drank long and deep from the intoxicating cup of vengeance. The caliph's council were terribly alarmed at Pooh-pooh's refusal to depart. At last the Moorish woman, who was at the bottom of all the mischief, thought it advisable to put a stop to it in order that Pooh-pooh might depart. The pains which May-flower had felt, left her as suddenly as they had seized her ; but she remained in so weak and exhausted a condition, that she entreated him to yield to the importunities of the whole court, and set out without her. It was only with the deepest reluctance that he obeyed her, but with all his heart he enjoined her not to visit Radiant until his return, and assuring her that he should use all despatch, set forth after exchanging the most tender adieus.

May-flower had vainly flattered herself that she should recover her health after his departure. She fell in spite of all her efforts into a state of languor, which was visibly wasting her away. She had entertained no doubt but that her pains having left her she should recover her wonted plumpness, but instead of those fresh and healthy looks which she so ardently desired would return ere her lover did, a gradual wasting daily altered her appearance.

At last, that which had been the most lively complexion in the world, turned to a dull pallid hue, and was soon succeeded by a greenish yellow tinge, which so disfigured her that she could scarcely recognise herself ; emaciation gradually defaced the loveliest bosom in the world, and the most perfect shape ever beheld was transformed into a skeleton.

While poor May-flower beheld herself reduced to so deplorable a condition, the triumph of the seneschal's widow was at its height. Her confidant had suggested to her that the pleasure of seeing her treated with contempt on account of her wretched appearance, would be far greater than to see her wept over by her lover, and it was to the choice of this punishment, which it was considered she would feel more severely, that the preservation of her life was due.

Meanwhile not a soul now saw the princess, for it was impossible to look at her without being provided with the parrot, and she had become so doatingly fond of it that she would let no one hold it but herself. The bird was talked of as a perfect marvel in point of beauty ; but no one ever mentioned his wit, for he spoke but little, and whenever he did so, his answers were invariably at cross purpose ; on the other hand, he was graceful in his action and polite in his manners.

Pooh-pooh's impatience accelerated his voyage ; he was back again before it was thought he could have reached half way, and brought with him the remedy against the evils caused by the loveliest eyes in the world.

The people followed him in crowds as far as Radiant's apartment, but not a soul followed him when he went in.

He carried with him a great phial as large as the largest drinking glass ; it was entirely made of one diamond, and contained a liquor so extremely bright that the dazzling eyes of the princess were themselves so overpowered by it she was obliged to close them.

Pooh-pooh seized the moment and moistened her temples and her eye-lids with it. As soon as this was done, she opened her eyes again, and Pooh-pooh having had all the doors thrown open, the people beheld the miracle and greeted it with acclamations. Her eyes appeared as brilliant as ever, but so harmless were they that an infant of a year old might have ogled her for a whole day and never the worse for it.

Pooh-pooh kissing the hem of her robe was the first to compliment her on the occasion, and withdrew under the pretext of bearing the news to the Caliph, when in reality he was obeying the promptings of his heart that led him towards his charming May-flower.

The news of his return and of the miracle he had performed, had spread so rapidly, however, in all directions, that he found he could not escape seeing the Caliph before he visited his mistress.

The good prince was like to have gone crazy with joy when he was informed that his daughter's eyes had lost all their mischievous power, but not a jot of all their beauty ; and when Pooh-pooh wetting his eyes with the liquid, restored him to sight, he appeared less delighted to behold once more the light of day, than grateful towards him who had restored it to him.

He knelt down before him and insisted on embracing his feet, and after other excesses less becoming his rank than his gratitude, he was for conducting him forthwith to his daughter, that she might choose him for her husband, and marry him the same day, protesting in the presence of his council, that he should never be happy until he saw his palace filled with a tribe of little Pooh-poohs.

"Oh! as for the little Pooh-poohs I can't resist them," said the Sultan, "I give in; I've had all the trouble in the world to resist the other, but I can stand no more. Dinarzade, I acknowledge myself beaten; I owe you the life of your sister, take it, it is yours, and I here restore all my affection to her, which she deserves not only by her charms and her erudition, but more especially by the beautiful stories with which she has sent me to sleep for so many nights. Go, Dinarzade, summon hither the vizir your father; let him bring my sceptre with all haste, and the seal of the empire, that I may confirm, with all the requisite solemnities, the promise I made you."

Dinarzade waited not to be told a second time; and soon after returned with the grand vizir, who wept scalding tears as he affixed the seal to his daughter's pardon. When this was done, respectfully raising the coverlet, he made three profound obeisances at the foot of the imperial bed. The Sultana then making one leap from the bed to the ground, and prostrating herself before her lord and master, kissed the little toe of his left foot, which he stretched out to her in the most affectionate manner, while at the same time he raised himself up, and applied his royal sceptre to the end of her nose, according to the custom of the country, in token of his pardon.

At the conclusion of these ceremonies, the vizir and the prudent Dinarzade, having assisted the empress into bed again, drew the curtains, and deeming their presence no longer requisite, opened the doors, and were about to withdraw, when the Sultan, calling them back, said,

"I do not repent the pardon which I have granted the Sultana, but as I am resolved that in all my actions justice shall go hand in hand with clemency, to-morrow, at break of day, I will have the traitor hanged who has dared reveal the proceedings of my councils. Dinarzade could never have learned what had taken place with respect to Pooh-pooh but

from her father or her lover. My vizir, therefore, and the Prince of Trebizonde, will have to draw lots, and the loser, whether he be guilty or simply unfortunate, shall be sacrificed according to the ordinances of the state."

The vizir, well acquainted with the inhuman nature of his master, turned paler than death at this decree, and going down on both his knees, took heaven and earth, the prophet and the Koran, to witness that he was innocent. But the courageous Dinarzade, far from taking alarm at these menaces, exclaimed,

" You are far readier, my lord, to form inhuman resolutions than to afford any proofs of your affection. I ought to be more affected than any other by what you have said, if it be true that either my father or the Prince of Trebizonde are guilty ; nevertheless I consent to abandon them both to your anger if I fail to obtain your own acknowledgment before the end of my story that it was yourself who revealed to me this precious secret, and that if it be a crime to have spoken of it, your terrible highness would better deserve the rope than either my father or the prince, whom you call my lover."

The vizir had almost fainted away at the temerity of his daughter's speech ; but the equitable Sultan, as if just awaking to consciousness after a profound reverie, first clasped his hands together, then removing his nightcap, asked pardon of Mahomet ; and having rubbed Dinarzade's nose thrice with his royal sceptre, thrice that of his vizir, and thrice his own, promised to do as much the next day to the captivating Trebizonde. When the ceremonial of this amnesty was concluded, he conjured the prudent Dinarzade never to reveal what had passed between them relative to Pooh-pooh ; and as it was only a quarter to one he ordered her to finish her story, which she did in the following terms :—

The Caliph's council were on the point of repeating after him the name of the little Pooh-poohs, as they had done that of the great, but they remembered that it was forbidden by one of the articles of his previous treaty.

While the Caliph hastened to embrace his daughter, Pooh-pooh was called upon to cure all those who had suffered from her charms. The number of victims was immense, but as the remedy was quickly applied, he had soon dispatched them. Acclamations and cries of joy resounded everywhere ;

and amidst this universal rejoicing May-flower alone was unhappy.

The report of Pooh-pooh's arrival had reached the seneschal's widow, who lost no time in apprising May-flower; on receiving this intelligence, which at any other time would have filled her with joy, she was nearly driven wild with despair. Still believing that her cruel rival and her confidant sympathised with her misfortune, she threw herself at their feet, and entreated that Pooh-pooh might not behold her in such a condition. They promised to comply with her request, telling her at the same time that she could not refuse seeing the Caliph, who, as soon as his sight was recovered, had desired to satisfy his curiosity relative to one who was represented to be as beautiful as Radiant herself; and while saying this, the cruel wretches, in spite of her resistance, began to dress her up from head to foot, that she might appear the more disfigured.

The poor creature was nothing but skin and bone; a pale bluish tint had replaced the brilliant vermillion of her lips and cheeks; the fire of her eyes was extinguished, and her emaciated face appeared more ghastly still beneath the brilliant head-dress in which they had dressed her.

Thus accoutred, they laid her out upon a rich couch, where she had scarcely adjusted herself, when she heard her lover ascending the stairs. The heartless couple told her it was the Caliph, and withdrew.

May-flower made an effort to raise herself in order to receive him with respect; but when, instead of the Caliph, she beheld Poop-pooh, uttering a wild shriek, she threw herself back on the support of the couch. Surprised as he was at this action, he was much more so at the strange figure before him; drawing near, however, while she was recovering her senses, he inquired of her where he should find May-flower. This was the fatal blow to her suffering heart; her strength abandoned her, and instead of answering him, hiding her visage in a corner of the couch, she gave way to tears and despair.

Pooh-pooh, completely at a loss what to make of all this grief, and of the figure she presented, left the room to seek for May-flower in every apartment of the house. The seneschal's widow and her Moorish attendant repeated over and over again, with bursts of laughter, that he had but just left her. Vexed

out of all patience at so unseasonable a jest, and still more incensed at the complacent and satisfied air with which they seemed to be making a sport of him, he left them abruptly, and repaired to the palace, where a scene of a different nature awaited him.

The beautiful parrot had taken flight while Pooh-pooh was engaged doctoring the eyes of the princess, whom he now beheld rolling on the ground and tearing her hair.

The Caliph and all his court were mounted upon ladders, looking at the tops of the beds, into the cornices of the ceiling, and ransacking every place where it might possibly have thrust itself.

Pooh-pooh, who could make nothing of all he saw, inquired of every one whether they had seen anything of May-flower, and was only answered by being asked the same question about the parrot. He set them all down as mad, and was nigh becoming so himself. Directly the Caliph saw him, he ran to meet him, and believing that nothing was beyond his power, entreated him to appease the despair of Radiant by restoring the lost parrot.

Pooh-pooh was amazed at the father's anxiety, no less than at the obstinacy of the daughter, and unable to understand how there could exist any other source of uneasiness than that which troubled him, instead of replying to what the Caliph said, he told him that it was only by making himself responsible to Serena for the safety of May-flower that he had been able to obtain the remedy for so many evils; that, before all, May-flower must be found, and then he had no doubt he should have no difficulty in recovering the parrot.

Radiant heard these words of consolation, and believed them coming from the lips of one who boasted of nothing he was unable to achieve. Tranquillity returning to her heart, recomposed her countenance, whose charms had fled at the approach of grief. The remembrance of Pooh-pooh began to return to her at the same time, and she recalled all that he had done for her, and all that she had promised him. After musing some time, the memory of her first attachment, of her word which she had pledged, and of her gratitude, presenting themselves to her mind at one and the same moment, settled her determination, and kneeling before her father, she besought him

that he would allow her to acquit herself of all her engagements towards a man who had risked everything to serve her.

On hearing this, the Caliph leapt for joy in a manner which astounded the whole court, and, instead of answering his daughter, nearly smothered her with kisses, assuring her that she could not have more delighted him, had she made a choice which would have added fifteen such provinces as Cashmere to his dominions ; and, turning round to embrace his future son-in-law, and present him with the hand of the loveliest princess in the world, discovered that he was missing. In vain was search made for him in every corner of the palace ; no sooner had he got an inkling of the end towards which Radian's reflections were drifting, with which one or two glances sufficiently supplied him, than he had immediately dived into the crowd and returned with all haste to the house of the seneschal's widow. It was there he had left his beloved May-flower when he set out on his journey to Serena, and it was there he was resolved to find her, or know what had become of her. He found her ; but, gracious heaven ! in what a condition !

The reflections which she had made in the intervals of her tears after he had left her, tended in no way to alleviate her distress. He had inquired of her own self where he should find May-flower ! "Frightfully altered, indeed, did he find the unfortunate May-flower," said she. "But, alas ! if he had ever loved me, could his heart have failed to recognise me. I fear he recognised me but too well !" she continued : "yes, he recognised and loathed me, and never shall I behold him again."

Another and a more violent fit of pain seized her at this moment, which she hoped would be the last of her life ; and as she had kept by her the tablets in which Pooh-pooh had written so many tender and impassioned things, she desired to leave a faithful portraiture of the feelings of her heart, in bidding him a last adieu. Nothing could be more touching than the words in which this was expressed.

That which is uttered under circumstances of so solemn a nature rarely fails to inspire the deepest emotion, and poor May-flower, obeying the promptings of a sincere heart, impressed with the conviction that it was about to cease beating for

ever, fainted away, as she pencilled her last parting words upon the tablets. Pooh-pooh knew them again, but it was not till he had read what she had just written that he recognised May-flower herself. His blood was congealed in his veins at the spectacle ; he examined her from head to foot, but could find nothing of the being he loved in the strange figure that was before him. He thought her dead, and indeed, from the appearance she presented, any one might have imagined she had been so for a fortnight at least.

Affection succeeded astonishment in his breast, and was presently joined by compassion, while despair was hovering near at hand. Pressing the cold and emaciated hand of his mistress in transport to his lips, he bathed it in a torrent of tears. This action arrested the spirit about to depart for ever ; she feebly opened her eyes, and beheld at her feet one whose presence she desired the most ardently of any in the world, yet feared the most,—one who alone could cause her to regret life, or wish for death.

The tender things which they said to each other would have melted the heart of the most savage being. He earnestly protested that he loved her no less than when she was arrayed in all the charms of her former freshness and beauty ; that though her charming appearance had at first captivated his heart, her mind, her gentleness, and all the engaging graces of her manners had made a more lively and durable impression than any that the most brilliant charms could produce, and one which only death could efface.

She wept with joy and emotion, and, for the first time in her life, pressed his hand, because she imagined it would also be the last ; and though the pressure was feeble, her whole heart went with it. She gave him to understand that after such sincere proofs of a constancy so rare, she died happy ; and believed that she was doing as she said.

The impertinent seneschal's widow now appeared to interrupt this touching conversation ; all her jealousy was roused once more when she beheld Pooh-pooh kneeling at the feet of a being whom she thought he would have looked upon with horror. She had just returned from the court, where she had been informed of the Princess's design with respect to Pooh-pooh, and of the Caliph's transports of delight on announcing

this marriage. She took care to compliment him on his good fortune in the presence of the dying May-flower.

The stroke was well calculated to despatch her victim at once ; the sudden transport of jealousy, however, which was intended to overwhelm her strength, kindled anew the flickering embers of life ; but it was only that she might suffer renewed tortures.

At this moment the Princess, accompanied by the Caliph, her father, and the whole court, entered the apartment. Her surprise was extreme at beholding such a figure as that before which Pooh-pooh was kneeling ; but still greater was the amazement of May-flower, as she gazed on a beauty who surpassed all that had ever been said of her. It was then that her courage, and what little strength she had still remaining, deserted her at once ; she kept her eyes for a while fixed upon Radiant, then turned them towards her lover, and a moment after closed them for ever.

He uttered a wild piercing shriek, at which the assembly started with horror, and which imparted some degree of emotion to Radiant.

The Caliph perceiving it, said, in order to tranquillise her, " Be assured this cry of grief is a mere nothing ; you will soon see that this carcass over which he is lamenting will turn out to be some aged relative, and a certain tribute must be paid to the ties of blood." Addressing himself to Pooh-pooh then—" Come, my friend," said he, " let me see you stand up and wipe your eyes ; 'ods my life, 'tis making a fool of one to be crying like a child beside that old mummy of a thing, when I have come to offer you the kingdom of Cashmere, and the hand of the Princess Radiant."

I know not what answer another might have made to such an harangue as this, but Pooh-pooh made none of any kind, so that the crowd of bystanders thought him dead, as well as May-flower.

Matters were in this position when the Moorish woman made her appearance. She appeared afflicted at the death of May-flower, and seemed to feel for the grief of Pooh-pooh ; but seeing the state of embarrassment in which the Caliph was, she advised him to have the body removed and buried immediately, if he desired to render Pooh-pooh amenable to reason. The

advice of this woman, since she had governed the mind of the seneschal's widow, had always been followed as strictly as though an oracle had spoken ; nor was it neglected in this instance.

In vain did Pooh-pooh, with shrieks, and every effort at resistance, seek to prevent this separation. He was torn by force from her whom he loved more than life : a funeral pile was raised in the palace-yard, upon which May-flower was laid, while the despairing Pooh-pooh was violently dragged from the scene.

After the performance of certain mournful ceremonies, the Caliph, desirous to do every honour to a person in whom his future son-in-law had appeared so interested, caused a number of flambeaux, composed of aromatic gums and other costly ingredients, to be distributed, first to his daughter and the council, then to the officers of the crown and to his courtiers ; and raising that which he held in his hand above his head : "Would to Heaven," he said, "that my son Pooh-pooh might witness with what honours I am about to burn the body of her whose loss he so much laments ; I am well assured it would afford him considerable satisfaction."

At these words, he was about to set fire to the four corners of the pile, when suddenly the air resounded with harmonious sounds, and in a few moments, Serena, mounted on the mare Jingle, appeared before them.

The sensations which her presence created in the assembled crowd were extremely various in their nature ; it arrested the officious zeal of the Caliph, and struck the courtiers with respect for a person in whose bearing there was something august and imposing ; from Radiant it elicited shouts of joy as she beheld her lost parrot perched on the wrist of the enchantress, but it threw the seneschal's widow into such confusion that she would have been seen to change colour had nature supplied that which was on her cheek ; while her confidant turned her eyes in every direction in the hopes of making her escape, but soon felt that her case was desperate.

The learned Serena, alighting from her steed, advanced towards the pile ; in her right hand she held the wand of truth. This wand was of gold and so extremely brilliant that it over-powered the sight.

She pretended to be ignorant of the occasion which had given rise to the spectacle before her, and on her seeking an explanation from the Caliph: "It is the body," said he, "of one May-flower, which we were about to consume by fire."

"And of what crime has she been guilty?" said she in a tone of severity. "What has this May-flower done to you that she should be burnt alive?"

The assembled crowd started with horror, or with joy at these words. The Caliph begged her pardon for having forgotten that she was her daughter, but nevertheless obstinately maintained that she was dead, and the proof of it was, that they were about to burn her.

Serena, not deigning to answer him, commanded May-flower to be taken down from the pile, and having caused her to be laid upon a couch and conveyed into the palace, drew near her, and turning to the Caliph :

"You shall see," she said, "that she is not dead, and there are among you those who know it but too well."

At the end of this speech, she touched May-flower on the forehead with the end of her wand, and in an instant she was seen to revive and her eyes opened; but her expression depicted the astonishment of one, who, on awakening from a long sleep, finds herself in a place unknown to her.

The august Serena appeared surprised at the frightful change which had taken place in her appearance. She inquired for Pooh-pooh, who was immediately summoned to her presence, for when she spoke all obeyed. No sooner did he make his appearance than the beautiful parrot set up a loud shriek and clapped his wings. Pooh-pooh recognised him as the bird he had met with on his road to the sorceress Dentata; but in the grief which absorbed him, he paid no great attention to this incident, for he was ignorant of what had just taken place.

Serena, eyeing him with indignation, exclaimed, "Wretch! have you the face to appear in my presence, you who engaged yourself at the peril of your own life to answer for that of May-flower! Was it not treachery enough that you consented to the cruel poison which, after throwing her into a mortal languor, rendered her frightful to behold. But you abandoned her like a coward to the ruthless cruelty of her enemies, and to the

flames, which but now were about to devour all that remained of the innocent May-flower ; abandoning her in so barbarous a manner only that your treachery might appear the more signal in those eyes for which you betrayed her."

Pooh-pooh was as little moved by this long tirade of reproaches as though they had been addressed to another ; he was entirely taken up with the death of May-flower, and his mind seemed to be wandering in search of her shade. But the enchantress, who was only putting him to the proof that he might triumph the more signally, addressing him again : " Go," said she, " and receive the reward which the fates have in store for you, notwithstanding the blackness of your infidelity ; it is a recompense which you have deserved by your courage and firmness in bringing to an end the most arduous and perilous of enterprises. " And you, princess," she said, addressing Radiant, " choose, or rather claim now your husband. You were not indifferent to Pooh-pooh before he had dared so much in your service ; everything now speaks in his favour, and I command you, on behalf of the fates, to name your husband."

Radiant looked at the beautiful parrot, then at Pooh-peep, and then at May-flower, glancing several times from one to the other, and, after musing a few moments : " Let him choose for himself," she said, " between May-flower, and Radiant."

Pooh-pooh started at these words ; and as though just awakening from a dream : " Fair Radiant," said he, addressing her, " I am not worthy a glory to which I now no longer aspire, and on which indeed I have not bestowed a thought from the first moment I beheld the unfortunate May-flower. She is now no more, and my heart upbraids me for every instant that I survive her. For her alone did I live, and the only choice which is now left me is to follow her."

" What if she still lived ? " said Serena.

These words recalled him in some measure to himself, and a gleam of hope stole into his heart. He knew the power of Serena, and throwing himself at her feet :

" What if she live ! " he exclaimed, " Let her live ! and if her life can be purchased at the expense of mine, let Pooh-pooh perish, and let May-flower behold once more the light of day."

However far from a fool a man may be, there are always a

hundred circumstances when, if he be passionately enamoured, he will have no control over his actions ; but it is in accordance with propriety itself to betray a loss of self-possession under an affliction such as that he imagined himself suffering. So completely deprived of ordinary sense was he upon this occasion, that he would have remained prostrate at the feet of Serena till the end of the world, waiting for the resurrection of his mistress, without ever dreaming for an instant that she was not dead.

The gentle May-flower, whose ears not a word of this conversation escaped, lay almost fainting upon her couch with excess of joy and gratitude.

Serena now thought it time to grant some relief to the grief of so perfect a lover. She raised him in spite of his will from the ground, where he persisted in remaining upon his knees like a criminal suing for pardon ; and laying aside the assumed aspect of severity which she had given to her countenance and her look :

"Advance," she said, "advance, and behold once more your own May-flower ; and if your constancy be proof against the frightful alteration of her appearance, live for her as she will live for you."

Pooh-pooh, on again beholding her, in the first transports of his joy, said and did a thousand things at which any one unacquainted with the nature of love would have died of laughing. He then protested in the presence of the whole court, taking heaven and earth to witness, that he would call no other woman his wife than May-flower. It became her to combat this resolution by such a display of self-denial and generosity as might induce him to abandon it. Accordingly she began to protest that her devotion and gratitude to him were such that she could not receive the hand that was offered her ; that her conscience would not allow that he should sacrifice the most brilliant fortune, and the most lovely princess in the world, to bestow himself upon her, even though she still possessed those poor attractions which she had now lost ; but that presenting the frightful figure she then did, she would rather a thousand times perish than consent to it.

The divine Radiant, and the Caliph her father, played but an awkward part during this contest of generosity. He had sufficient sense to perceive it, and addressing Serena :

" This would be all very fine, indeed," said he, " and highly creditable to both parties, I've no doubt, if there were no such person in the world as my daughter ; but is she—a handsome, fine-grown girl—to have no husband at all ? or is she to amuse herself all her life with the bird which you have just returned to her. A pretty make-shift, indeed, for a young princess to take up with a parrot instead of a husband ! "

He was going on to say a great deal more, when the illustrious Serena, calling the whole assembly to silence, requested the particular attention of the Caliph, his council, and his courtiers. There was something so noble in the tone of her address, that all sunk into the most respectful silence; while the Moorish woman began to tremble in all her limbs.

Serena, taking the parrot which the princess was holding, set it down upon the ground at some distance from her, and touching him on the top of the head with her wand, traced a circle of some width about him, in the midst of which there immediately rose a thick vapour which entirely concealed him. The couch upon which May-flower lay extended was subjected to the same ceremony ; and touching her on the forehead she was immediately enveloped in a similar cloud of vapour.

While the eyes of all were attentively fixed upon these proceedings, Jingle was pacing round and round in a circle about the spectators, and the ringing of her bells gave forth a concord of sounds which so surpassed all her previous performances, that all were breathless with admiration.

Of what marvellous assistance is a little magic to unravel the meshes of a plot, and bring about the end of a tale. So long as Jingle continued to gallop about, so long did May-flower and the parrot continue wrapt in the clouds which surrounded them. But when the enchantress struck the earth thrice with her wand, Jingle suddenly halted, the clouds dispersed, and in the place where the parrot had been set, there appeared a young man of the handsomest and the most charming figure in the world.

Pooh-pooh immediately recognised his brother, Prince Phoenix, and uttered a cry of amazement. But just as the latter was about to throw himself into his arms, Pooh-pooh, turning round, beheld May-flower a thousand times more

beautiful, and a thousand times more blooming than she had appeared to him when first he saw her beside the rivulet, or even than when he had gazed with so much delight upon her sleeping form.

The people expressed their astonishment by a confusion of reiterated cries, the courtiers by exaggerated speeches, and the Caliph by tears of joy.

Radiant attentively contemplated a metamorphosis which did not appear to displease her; while the eyes of Phœnix were riveted upon hers.

But the impassioned Pooh-pooh, wildly giving a loose to the excess of his joy, was about to exhibit a thousand proofs of it at the feet of May-flower, had not Serena arrested him as he was on the point of throwing himself before her, and taking him by the hand, led him beside his brother. They now fell into each other's arms, and exchanged the most affectionate embraces in the world, but were shortly interrupted in their expressions of brotherly love by the act of Serena placing the Princess Radiant immediately before them.

"Carefully survey these two brothers," she said; "weigh with deliberation the services of the one, and the charms of the other; but, above all, consult the movement of your own heart ere you decide upon a choice which your destiny renders irrevocable: which of these two princes do you choose for your husband; you cannot make an unworthy choice, nor can he whom you choose refuse to become yours."

Pooh-pooh, in a great measure tranquillised by the appearance of Phœnix, trembled nevertheless lest the devil should tempt her to fix upon him. But as there could be no comparison between them in point of beauty, Radiant hesitated not a moment in her choice, and gave her hand at once to the handsome brother. Serena then joined those of Pooh-pooh and May-flower, this being all the ceremony required in those days for the solemnisation of marriages; and never since marriages first came into fashion, were princes better married nor brides more perfectly contented with their lot.

The Caliph not a whit less delighted himself, ordered all the cannon to be fired, bonfires to be lighted at the corner of every street, fireworks to be let off on the river and in the public squares, largess to be showered among the people, and

the fountains to flow with wine instead of water. As to the magnificent rejoicings which were to take place at court, he undertook the care of these himself, and in all the world there was not a prince to equal him for the management of a festival. But ere he returned into the palace bent on this important purpose, Serena informed him that the drama which she had just enacted was only concluded as regarded the reward of virtue, and that there was yet something more for the wand of truth to accomplish.

The seneschal's widow and her confidante had nigh been forgotten, so completely was every one absorbed in the general rejoicing ; but the equitable Serena, who allowed nothing to escape her, touched their foreheads with the infallible wand. All the change the seneschal's widow suffered by this process was the tumbling off of about four fingers' thickness of paint from each cheek, as much from her forehead, and about twice as much from her throat and breast. What remained after this abstraction was a wrinkled hag, whose ridiculous figure, tricked out in the youthful finery, which she still retained, was enough to make one die of laughter.

The entire change which the person of the Moorish woman underwent, revealed the horrible features of Dentata, who had assumed this disguise in order to carry out her project of vengeance. May-Flower began to be seized with the same terrors with which the old witch had formerly inspired her, but Serena soon dissipated them by thus addressing the Caliph : "Sire," she said, "the fate of these wretches is in your hands ; it is for you to pronounce their sentence."

"Well," said he, "in that case they shall not linger long. Send for my provost-marshal, light up the pile, set the sorceress on the top of it, and send the seneschal's widow to Bedlam."

In vain did the gentle nature of May-Flower incline for mercy. Peoh-pooh had not forgotten the cruelties she had practised towards her ; he felt the box on the ear so unjustly dealt her still tingling on his cheek, and confirmed the sentence passed upon the odious Dentata. As for the seneschal's widow, no one pitied her fate.

The illustrious and charming company then betook themselves to the palace, leaving the executioners to do their duty.

The Caliph began by issuing all the necessary orders for the approaching fête, which was to eclipse in magnificence all that he had ever yet given ; and he had given some of the most marvellous grandeur. While the execution of his orders was giving rise to a scene of busy activity, anxious to do the honours of his court in person to Serena, he made her admire the various beauties of a superb saloon which had been completed shortly after the birth of Radiant. Doubtless, there was nothing in his palace worthier the attention of the learned enchantress, for even the inaccessible abode which she had built for herself scarcely boasted of anything so marvellous or so splendid. The Caliph perceiving her admiration, "Don't run away with the idea," said he, "that it is I who have imagined all this. You must know that during the pregnancy of the late queen, I had a dream, in which I thought that she was brought to bed of a little dragon, who, immediately he was born, began to gnaw the whites of my eyes. I consulted all the learned men on the subject of a dream which caused me considerable anxiety. Some said that I should have a son who would dispossess me of my throne, after putting my eyes out ; others maintained that he would only cast my glory into the shade, either by feats of arms, or by the vivacity of his wit, which was to eclipse the light of my own. My only anxiety was, lest the first prediction should be fulfilled. At last, one who pretended to deeper skill than the rest, assured me that this son would threaten the tranquillity of my mind, or that of my dominions, unless I could raise up this building before his birth ; he gave me the plan of it, such as you now see it, and undertook to carry it into execution. But in spite of all the diligence he could use, the queen, my spouse, was delivered of Radiant before it could be completed. All my fears ceased, when, instead of the diabolical little dragon of a son, with which their predictions threatened me, I beheld myself the father of the loveliest girl the world had ever seen ; for in fact she was only too beautiful, as we subsequently had occasion to find out ; for if your gracious self and Pooh-pooh had not taken the matter in hand, my whole court would, at this moment, be every one of them as blind as bats. But you, from whom nothing is hidden, can, no doubt, tell me how it came to be interpreted, that I should have a son instead of a

daughter? What was the object of building this saloon, with all its ornaments?—in short, what was the meaning of the whole dream, for it must have had respect to Radiant, seeing that it bore upon the subject of eyes?"

"Do you wish to know?" said Serena. "Here is the explanation of the whole mystery. Your dream was purely and simply a dream, your interpreters were impostors or ignorant fools, and he who advised you to build this saloon was an architect who wanted to profit by the advice he gave you. But let us join our lovers, and you will learn some further and more particular account of the fatal effects which were produced for a certain time by the eyes of Radiant."

The two brothers had been at no loss how to bestow their time during this conversation; they were both passionately enamoured, and both found favour in the eyes of the two most charming creatures in the world. Their beauty, it is true, was of a different character; that of Radiant inspired amazement, but May-Flower's had a touching grace; one dazzled the eye, the other insinuated itself to the very bottom of the heart, as it disclosed a succession of nameless charms, which are felt better than they are expressed.

The handsome Phœnix, after again exchanging caresses with a brother whom he tenderly loved, was on the point of satisfying the desire he felt of learning what adventures had befallen him since their separation, when the Caliph and the illustrious Serena joined them.

Pooh-pooh begged that they would be pleased to allow the recital to take place in their presence, and Phœnix began as follows:—

THE STORY OF PHœNIX.

When Prince Bulfinch and I parted from each other in search of adventures—

"And who, if you please," said the Caliph, "may Prince Bulfinch be?"

"I," said Pooh-pooh, "am that individual; I laid aside the name, I cannot tell why, and assumed that which I now bear, and which I am resolved to bear to the end of my days, for

under that name was it that I became known to the lovely May-Flower."

Pooh-pooh then informed them of that part of his adventures with which they were not acquainted, up to the time of his parting with Phœnix, who then resumed his narrative.

We had agreed, said he, as he has but now related to you, that whichever of us failed in his design of establishing himself should return and take possession of our dominions, provided the other should have secured his fortune elsewhere. As for myself I renounced all idea of ever availing myself of this resource ; and, proud of the advantages of which I imagined myself possessed, I thought of nothing but parading my face and figure about the world for admiration. But the hearts I succeeded in touching in the first instance had nothing in the way of money or charms to attract me in turn, and I thought I should be more likely to find my reckoning in Circassia, a country which has always been famous for its beauties.

It was governed by a queen, after the death of the king her husband, who had left four daughters behind him, the eldest of which was to reign as soon as she had attained her majority.

Hereupon did I build my project of obtaining a settlement for myself ; but fortune, who had a treasure infinitely more precious in store for me, frustrated my intentions ; for, ere I had reached the country, I was apprised of the disaster of the royal family in consequence of a most unexpected revolution.

A certain petty prince, upon the score of some ill-grounded pretensions, having incited the minds of a fickle and suspicious people to revolt, and gained over by bribery the nobles of the kingdom, had succeeded in seizing the reins of government so suddenly, that the queen had scarcely been able to escape with her daughters.

I was hastily travelling through the kingdom, unwilling to make any stay amongst so perfidious a nation, when I was arrested by order of the tyrant, by whom all foreigners were eyed with suspicion, as for the most part occurs under an usurped and ill-established power.

When I was brought into his presence, I withheld from him neither my name nor the rank which I held, and I was honoured with a reception for which I was totally unprepared.

I know not what prepossessed a prince in my favour who could not have been accustomed to make a display either of generosity or courtesy. Nevertheless, he detained me longer than I wished at his court, where I received the same honours as were paid to himself, and where he seemed desirous of keeping me altogether, by offering me the hand of his only daughter, a princess whose inclination for marriage was great in proportion as her face rendered the consummation of her wishes improbable. Her person was deformed, and a pair of diminutive eyes had informed me of her favourable disposition long before her father communicated his proposal; but I was repugnant to form an alliance with a usurper; and, without wishing to flatter myself, I think it was with considerable dignity that I rejected his offer, and politely sent his little hump-backed daughter to the deuce.

I had quitted Circassia when chance conducted me into an old mansion, which, though it certainly had a superb appearance, I imagined, in the first instance, to be uninhabited, for it was a considerable time before I could meet with a living soul. Those who resided in this gloomy abode remained shut up within their particular apartments, and when they happened to leave them, appeared studiously to shun each other. I was surprised at so savage a custom, for it appeared to me that they might easily have dissipated their gloom by humanising one with another.

Seeking some one from whom I could obtain an explanation of this state of things, I entered an apartment of decent appearance. There was not a soul in it, but I beheld a table, upon which were cards and counters, with chairs set round it.

A moment after, four magpies made their appearance, followed each by a starling supporting its tail, and accompanied by a grave-looking crow.

The magpies, after saluting me very civilly, sat down, and began to play, while the crow settled herself to work.

May-flower and Pooh-pooh, who had continually exchanged glances during this recital, began to nudge each other when the magpies were mentioned. Radiant, who had never taken her eyes off the handsome Phenix since he had commenced his narrative, seemed to doubt whether he were speaking seriously. Serena smiled at an adventure with which she was not

unacquainted, but the Caliph was holding his sides with laughter.

"Oh, as for this part of the story," said he, "son-in-law, I see you are a bit of a traveller. I'll allow you the magpies, with their tail-bearers and their courtesies, but as for magpies playing at cards, such a thing was never seen."

After vouching for the perfect veracity of his narrative, Phoenix continued. "I stood for a long time watching a game which apparently was never played by any but magpies, and for my part I might have been looking on to this day, without being a bit the wiser. At last, one of the magpies, who seemed of a lively disposition, after pronouncing some word which I have now forgotten, jumped upon the table. I cannot tell how it is this word has escaped me, for the other magpies screamed themselves hoarse in repeating it; the crow gravely pronounced it, and even the little starlings, who snuffed the candles, joined their voices to the concert. I was so stunned with the noise, that I suddenly left the apartment, uncertain whether I was dreaming, or had really witnessed this extraordinary scene.

On leaving this kingdom, I heard some account of Cashmere, and was informed that it was the loveliest country in the universe, and possessed the loveliest princess in the world.

My only thought from that moment was to hasten thither with all the diligence I could use. It was in vain that everyone expatiated on the dangers which threatened those who expose themselves to her glances. "What other danger," said I, "can there be than that of becoming enamoured of them, and of dying in an ecstacy of adoration, should the fair one prove cruel?" For I treated as fables all the stories about the fatal poison communicated by the overpowering brightness of her eyes, of which such marvellous descriptions were given, and such tragical consequences related.

"It is not to such a person as Phoenix," said I, puffed up with ridiculous vanity, "that the excessive lustre of her beauty will prove fatal. I will seek her, then, and brave all the chimeraical dangers which surround her; and if, indeed, her charms are fraught with so redoubtable a poison, she shall share the fate to which she exposes others, on beholding

Phœnix." I make confession, now, fair Radiant, of the ridiculous vanity which possessed me, only to punish myself by the shame which I feel in avowing it.

The secret sympathy which urged me towards you, caused me to neglect those precautions which were necessary to avoid the dangers I was threatened with, should I fail to select a proper route. I laughed to scorn all that I was told about that upon which the sorceress Dentata had established the scene of her enchantments, and as it was the shortest, I rashly adopted it, nor was I long ere I repented my folly.

I shall not enumerate all the warnings which were given me, as I advanced on my road. I traversed tracts of waste country, rocky and mountainous regions, and after suffering a thousand inconveniences, buried myself in a wood where a thousand monsters stood before me to obstruct my passage.

I thought to make a display of my bravery, in attacking the griffins who were wheeling about over my head, while hydras and leopards surrounded me on every side. Taking sword in hand, I imagined I had wounded several of my enemies, but after a prolonged combat, which exhausted my strength, and in the course of which I perceived the evident intention of taking me prisoner rather than sacrificing my life, I felt myself conveyed to a distance I know not by what means, and was set down in a garden of handsome appearance, where the sorceress was busily employed gathering herbs.

With these herbs she was about to compose some horrible charm, for it had to be mixed up with the still reeking blood of a man slaughtered for the occasion. I subsequently discovered this during my metamorphosis, and it was for this purpose the griffins had brought me living to her feet. Her face filled me with disgust, but mine found favour in the most ruthless heart that ever existed ; I perceived this, and soon discovered at what price I might expect to purchase my life. She informed me that if I would consent to marry her, she would make me master of an inestimable treasure, in addition to that of her own precious person, but that if I refused I should not be alive by the next day's sun. Without waiting for a reply she left me, that I might have time to consider this amiable offer.

I was not much inclined to die, and yet death appeared to

me to be the more honourable and the less difficult alternative to embrace.

"If I refuse her detestable hand," said I, "I shall make a most illustrious end of it, and if I accept it, I shall have won a glorious establishment for myself, after travelling so far to seek a fortune! Have I then flattered myself with the vain hope of finding favour in the eyes of the divine Radiant, she whose glances no mortal has ever sustained; have I aspired even to the glory of becoming hers; to see myself reduced to the alternative of becoming the husband of a frightful sorceress, or of dying an obscure death in a miserable retreat, where no one would dream that I had ever penetrated?"

These reflections were disagreeable enough, look at them which way I would, and yet the place in which I made them seemed like an enchanted region. I beheld the most beautiful fruit in the world, and especially some figs, which appeared delicious. It was a fruit for which at that time I had a particular taste: I selected one of the finest; I had no sooner plucked it than all my troubles were forgotten, and as soon as I had eaten it I fell asleep.

When I awoke, I found myself changed into a bird; the sorceress, whose cries had awakened me, was standing beside me in despair at a metamorphosis which was not in accordance with her designs.

She suspected May-Flower of having contributed to this disaster, without troubling herself in what manner, and vowed that she would punish her. I listened to all these lamentations and menaces, but truth to say, I was so surprised at this extraordinary adventure that I flattered myself it was only a dream, and impatiently awaited to be delivered from it by waking, but in vain.

The sorceress took me on her wrist, overwhelmed me with all the caresses which can be bestowed on a bird, and told me that I must have patience, and that in a week or ten days she should have completed a certain compound which would restore me to my former shape; but that I was to be careful and eat no salt if I should chance to find any. At the end of this address she left me in the garden, after plucking a number of herbs which I had never before seen.

Imagine the disorder of mind and the consternation into

which this adventure threw me. I wished to deplore my misfortune aloud, but instead of exclaiming "Hapless Phoenix!" I said "Pretty Poll, sweetheart!" and instead of the complaints and ejaculations that were struggling within me for utterance, I repeated all the saucy speeches which it is usual to teach parrots, and which the most troublesome of them repeat one after the other without interval. I was so mortified that I resolved never to speak again.

As I was allowed to fly about as much as I liked in the garden, I frequently caught sight, from the top of some tree, of the sorceress's house; but whenever I attempted to fly in that direction my wings refused to sustain me, and I made up my mind that any endeavour to perform the voyage on foot would be equally useless.

With respect to all other places, however, I was permitted to fly whither it pleased me. It was while taking one of my usual airings, that I saw a woman coming out of a miserable hut thatched with straw. She carried a small bag under her arm, and seated herself beside a small stream, in which she washed several fishes, and then began to salt them. The caution I had received immediately occurred to me, and I imagined I had only been forbidden to eat salt lest it should restore me to my former shape.

I flew to the ground beside this woman; my beauty delighted her, and as I appeared remarkably tame she ran after me for some time, when suddenly I rose in the air, bearing off with me the poor woman's bag, which I went and hid under a bush in an unfrequented place. I hastened back to the sorceress's garden immediately after this exploit, not daring to remain longer abroad to try the experiment which I meditated; but the next day the sun had no sooner risen than I was on the wing.

It was on that day that I fell in with my dear brother; my surprise at meeting him was only equalled by the joy I felt at seeing him again. I was dying for him to take me up in his hands, instead of which he troubled himself no further than gazing at me. I lost no time in trying the effect of the salt, but he was afraid lest it should hurt me. I wished to warn him of the danger with which he was threatened in approaching the sorceress's dwelling, but instead of speaking, I uttered a loud burst of laughter. It was then that in his admiration of

my form and plumage he pronounced my name in order to flatter me. I wished to reply to him, yes, dear brother, I am Phoenix ; but instead of this, all I could say was " Pooh-pooh ! " and I felt myself constrained to fly away, although I was in despair.

Two days afterwards, in the midst of my anxiety for the safety of Bulfinch, I heard from the garden the frightful yells of the sorceress.

It was you, my dear brother, for whose safety I was in such fear, who were the cause of her despair. You had just carried off her treasures and disarmed her fury, for the principal strength of her enchantments consisted in the mare and the luminous hat of which you had possessed yourself. It was not till then that I was permitted to fly towards her abode, which I was unable to reach until she was returning from her pursuit of you.

" At least," she exclaimed, " I shall have the pleasure of being half revenged for the treachery of the infamous May-Flower ; the thief who seduced her in order to betray me, has left her in Jingle's place, half smothered in the straw, where she gave herself up to him. Now then for my vengeance."

So saying, she entered the stable where she had been deceived by May-Flower's head-dress, in which the wretched Dentille was equipped, without having it in his power to tell his mother that it was he. Dentata, without giving a second look at what she was doing, set fire to the hay, and went out shutting the door of the stable behind her, so fearful was she lest her intended victim should escape.

She then hastened home to the only consolations which were now left her in her affliction. But they were not to be found in a hurry, for I was in the oak where I kept snug and out of sight, while I heard the yells of her only son, to whom the flames had allowed the use of his tongue again, by consuming the hay with which his mouth had been stuffed.

Meanwhile, the sorceress finding nothing at home, and suspecting some fresh disaster, returned to the stable, which she found enveloped in flames. Nevertheless she opened the door, and through the flames and the smoke, beheld her darling hope ending his days after the same fashion as that in which Heaven had decreed she should end her own. The little toad was grilled to a turn.

The scream which she uttered at this spectacle was so terrible that it thrilled me with horror, and the oak on which I was perched shook again. So violent was it that the long tooth which stuck out of her mouth was driven to a distance of more than fifty paces, and shattered into a thousand fragments. Any one else would have felt but little regret at such a loss, but it served only to increase her fury. "I am undone," she cried; "all my charms are deserting me, and I shall have to resort to artifice." Uttering these words she ran home, while I left my hiding-place and made my escape during her absence. I flew with all my might, and as night was falling, I chanced upon the bush where I had hidden my salt. I now began to hope that the sorceress would not find me again. "Thank Heaven," said I, "I am delivered from the cruel alternative of choosing between death and such a savoury spouse; nevertheless, here I am, a parrot for the rest of my days."

I shall not relate all that I had to endure ere I could reach the fortunate region in which my miseries were to terminate. I had nearly died of hunger amid the barren wastes where I could find no fruits to feed on, and moreover unused as I was to flying, I could only travel by very short stages at a time. All who saw me ran after me to catch me, and my only places of refuge were the tops of trees; even there I was not altogether secure against the little urchins who attacked me with sticks and stones and clambered up after me.

I recovered from all my fatigue, however, the moment I had reached this delightful region. The infernal Dentata had followed me unperceived, for I could have no suspicion of her presence under the disguise which she had assumed. She reached the confines of Cashmere soon after me, and kept up side by side with me, but without any appearance of design. I was accustomed to see myself admired by all who beheld me, so that I was not surprised at the attention which she bestowed upon me, and I could always get out of reach if any one approached too near.

As I was somewhat puzzled what was to become of me, although I was in a country where a hundred million parrots might have lived like princes, I frequently fell into a brown study. She perceived this, and looking at me with affection

as I stood perched on the top of a tree : "What a pity," she cried, "that so beautiful a parrot should have strayed away. No doubt he belongs to a king or some fair one who is, perhaps, at this moment, in despair at having lost him. Who knows but he may belong to the loveliest of the lovely ? But had he belonged to Radiant, he never would have preferred his liberty to the pleasure of beholding her. If he were not so wild," she continued, seeing that I was making my way down from branch to branch in order to listen to her ; "if he were not so wild, he would let me catch him, and I would make the handsomest present to the beautiful Radiant that her father's kingdom could furnish, by presenting her with the handsomest bird in the world. How happy would be his lot to be the delight of the fairest creature in the universe ! And what mortal would not exchange lots with a parrot who would daily have an opportunity of gazing on charms which the fair think not of concealing from a bird."

How well did she know whom she was addressing—the insinuating serpent ! I was so transported at the prospect, that she had but to hold out her hand as she finished speaking, and I perched on it as lightly as I could.

The eagerness I betrayed had well nigh proved as fatal as it was evident. I saw her countenance change from the moment she had me in her power ; her eyes appeared to sparkle ; she grasped my claws firmly with one hand, and twice placed the other about my neck, as though she would have twisted it. I was at a loss how to account for this emotion ; but it soon became clear to me when the wand of Serena discovered the horrible Dentata beneath the black skin of the Moorish woman.

Fortunately for me she overcame the first impulses of the vengeance and fury which inspired her. It better suited her designs to spare my life ; meanwhile she effectually contrived to prevent my escape until we arrived at this court.

From that day my happiness commenced. My parrot's eyes were able to sustain the fatal lustre of those of the adorable Radiant, and through the effects of some unknown charm, people who had not dared look at her fifty paces off, had but to take me on their wrists, and they could gaze with all the security in the world. I shall not now expatiate on

the transports of delight with which I was seized at the innocent caresses which she bestowed on me. On a thousand occasions, the circumstances of which I shall pass over in silence, the promises held out to me by the sorceress were fulfilled, and under the shape of a parrot I was but too richly rewarded, while in the society of Radiant, for all the horrors I had felt at the repulsive advances of Dentata. Under that shape, in short, I first found favour in the loveliest eyes the world can boast, and too happy should I be could I hope to make an impression equally favourable under that which I have resumed.

The handsome Phoenix here ceased speaking, and although Radiant had blushed more than once towards the end of his narrative, her beautiful eyes did not fail to assure him that he had lost nothing in her estimation by ceasing to be a parrot.

The Caliph thought the adventures of his son-in-law diverting enough, and was well pleased that he had refused the hand of the hump-backed princess which had been offered him in Circassia.

"But come, Master Phenix," said he, "lay your hand on your heart, and tell us frankly, had you never been changed into a parrot, whether you would not sooner have married the sorceress, her mother, her grandmother, and all the Dentatas in the world, than let your throat be cut like a booby? For my part I am as nice as another; but in my opinion life is life. However, never mind what I should have done; all I hope is, that the kingdom of Circassia, which shall be yours when I am tired of it myself, and the hand of Radiant, which is yours at this present moment, will make up for your refusal of the infant of Circassia."

"As for your brother Bulfinch, although he is not so wealthily married, he appears so happy with his wife and his mother-in-law, Serena, that you need not fear his envying you; for what with his happy knack of turning things to account, his little dominions, and what Serena may some day leave them, he won't be so badly off after all."

The modest May-flower, who, though devoid of ambition, would have wished that she had been born heiress to the whole universe, blushed at what the Caliph said. She was not

ashamed to owe her existence to so marvellous a personage as Serena ; but it was not without mortification that she heard a detail of all the advantages which Radiant possessed, to ensure the happiness of her husband, and reflected that Pooh-pooh had refused all these for her sake.

The equitable Serena beheld her embarrassment, and divined her secret thoughts ; requesting then to be heard in her turn :

" Learn, Caliph of Cashmere," she said, " you who certainly are under some obligation to Pooh-pooh, that he will have no occasion to envy the fortune of his brother. You have been witnesses of his preference of May-flower when at the point of death, of May-flower disfigured and horrible to behold ; and to sum up all, even of the very memory of May-flower, to the possession of Radiant in the height of all her glory. Judge, then, if in his present condition, he has not every reason to be satisfied with his lot. But learn, also, that Serena is not the sister of Dentata, nor is May-flower the daughter of Serena. Here is her history and mine."

HISTORY OF SERENA.

Between the Tigris and the Euphrates there exists a vast extent of level country, the rich fertility of which is unequalled, save, perhaps, in the kingdom of Cashmere. Over this tract of land my father reigned as sovereign ; of all mortals he had penetrated furthest into the most impenetrable secrets of nature ; but as he was devoted entirely to his speculations, he neglected the government of his dominions in order to scrutinise that of the stars above.

His territories, watered by the two largest streams in the universe, were so rich that his subjects became too wealthy. The most powerful of them felt their strength and perceived his weakness. Every one established himself in the manner which best suited him, while their prince, far from being troubled at their independence, appeared, on the contrary, delighted to be rid of a country in which there were no mountains, these having become necessary to him for the further development of scientific inquiries to which he had already sacrificed so much. He quitted his country accordingly in search of them, and while he travelled from mountain to mountain,

holding converse with the celestial bodies, the earthly possessions he had left behind him were quietly seized by other hands.

The intelligence he received of this produced no effect upon him ; love alone had any power to disturb him, nor was it the least of Cupid's conquests to triumph over the genius of a man plunged in abstract meditations on the most elevated subjects of contemplation.

I know not by what chance he was led to descend from these mountain heights into Circassia, where a more powerful impulse than that which he had hitherto obeyed, inspired him with a taste for mortal beauty. He became enamoured, and the fairest of the fair Circassians disdained not to accept the hand of a prince deprived of his dominions.

I doubt but she repented her choice ; for, instead of devoting his attention to his domestic establishment, he hastened back to pursue his studies on the mountain tops. However shocked his spouse may have been at the eagerness with which he gave himself up to pre-occupations which ought not to have intruded themselves upon the newly-tasted joys of a love marriage, she determined to follow him ; and it was upon the same mountain which May-flower and Pooh-pooh ascended on their road lither that my father established the head-quarters of his erratic speculations.

He selected for his retreat that part of the mountain which is rendered frightful by rocks and precipices ; and here he began to carry his investigations into the bowels of the earth, after having exhausted the celestial regions of all the knowledge they are capable of yielding to the human mind.

He soon attained such a degree of perfection as it is almost impossible to attain in this marvellous branch of study, through the pursuit of which succeeding generations have beheld so many superior minds degenerate into visionaries, and so many and such solid treasures dissipated in the vain search after an imaginary benefit.

The result of his labours left him nothing to desire ; he could convert at his will all the metals into gold, and the invisible powers dispersed in the air were obedient to his commands. Through their ministry he erected himself a palace in the midst of this mountain, in which even the commonest utensils glittered with gold, or sparkled with precious stones.

It was in this habitation, then newly built, that I came into the world. The next year my mother gave birth to a second daughter. I inherited my father's love for the sciences, while my sister shared the tastes as well as the beauty of my mother. But marvellous and splendid as was our retreat, my mother and my sister both complained of its solitude. One wished to behold once more the country in which she had first seen the light, while the other desired to ramble over the delightful plains situated between the Tigris and the Euphrates, which her father had abandoned for the barren spot in which she was pining away with languor and weariness.

My father perceived this, and soon after, my mother, notwithstanding the little exhibition of reluctance which they made to part from him, set out for Circassia, accompanied by my sister, who was far more delighted than she pretended to be at bidding us good-bye.

Money was of no importance to the master of such a secret as he possessed, and the magnificent equipage in which they made their appearance in my mother's native country, was worthy the former position of my father.

The King of Circassia no sooner beheld my sister than he gave her a glorious preference over all the beauties of Circassia. The fairest of these beauties were in despair that a stranger should come and carry off a heart for whose conquest they had struggled in vain. Some withered away with envy, others burst with spite, but my poor mother died with joy.

My father received intelligence of both events at the same time, and bore them with true philosophy. For my part, I confess that the joy I felt at one of these soon consoled me for my grief at the other. I was now entirely occupied improving myself in the study of the sciences, in which I made sufficient progress, and for which my taste increased in proportion as I felt myself acquiring new light.

At last my father, after communicating all the knowledge my mind was then fitted to receive, made up his mind to give himself up to death, that he might seek in another world that which he had failed to discover in this. He gave himself up to death, I say, for with all the secrets he possessed he might have lived as long as he had chosen.

I inherited his treasures and a portion of his knowledge, but

of all his gifts this wand which you see is infinitely the most precious. Its composition is an assemblage of all the secret virtues dwelling in minerals and talismans. With it I can command the elements, discover the truth under every disguise, dive into a portion of the future, and call before me the entire past. My father had forbidden me to ascend to the summit of the mountain which we inhabited. I had never before had any curiosity on this point, but it seized me directly I received this injunction, and his eyes were no sooner closed than I hastened to satisfy it.

It was from that time that, after contemplating the happy plains of Cashmere, I caused all the treasures I wanted, from the immense stores with which my father had enriched the caverns of this mountain, to be removed, and lest the number of visitors coming to consult me should break into those hours which I wished to devote to study or repose, I rendered my abode inaccessible to all whom I did not wish to receive.

There I tasted all the delights of a calm and tranquil mind, and far from envying my sister's establishment on the throne of Circassia, nothing disturbed the peacefulness in which my heart was lulled, saving my anxiety on her account.

As she had given birth to three daughters one after the other, I consulted my books relatively both to their destiny and to hers. I learned that she would have no more children, and that the king, her husband, would soon leave her a widow, and regent of his dominions. I discovered by the horoscope of the eldest that she was threatened with some disaster, the particular nature of which, however, I in vain employed every means to discover. All I could learn was, that a hostile power, equal almost to my own, would persecute her. I had recourse to my wand, and placing the end of it on a piece of parchment which I stretched out upon the table, it traced of its own accord the horrible physiognomy of Dentata, described the situation of her abode, the nature of her spells and her particular inclinations. I was shocked to learn that this most horrible of living creatures was even more the slave of her amorous desires than of her hatred or her cruelty, and that all her skill was exerted in entrapping men into her snares, who had no other alternative than death, if they refused to purchase their lives by a complaisance still more to be dreaded. I discovered, however, to

my grief, that so long as she retained possession of the mare Jingle and the luminous hat, neither my skill nor the power of my enchantments could be of any avail against hers.

I was informed, moreover, by my wand, that she had a son, who was of about the same age as the eldest of my sister's daughters, and I entertained no doubt but that it was her design to carry off the heiress of Circassia, and present her to this son of hers ; and for this reason I determined to take her under my protection. My sister despatched her privately to me, but this precaution had nigh caused her ruin ; for the sorceress contrived to snatch her from my arms at the very moment I had received her. It was all to no purpose that I pretended she was my daughter, the cruel Dentata was not to be deceived, and all my vigilance could not preserve the poor little May-flower from her inhuman persecutor. Yes, Caliph of Cashmere, this same May-flower, whom you now behold, and whom you were in such a hurry to burn, is heiress to the kingdom of Circassia. She was torn from me, as I was saying, without my having the power to discover in what manner, nor could all my skill, nor all the powers of the earth, have effected her deliverance from the hands of the sorceress, had not Pooh-pooh undertaken to accomplish it. The glory of this achievement was reserved by the Fates to the most ingenuous and to the most faithful of lovers. I knew that both these qualities were requisite in the man who should succeed in carrying off Jingle and the luminous hat, but I was at a loss where to find one of such a stamp.

At this time, also, Radiant came into the world ; and my books, which I consulted on the occasion of her birth, having informed me what this beauty was destined one day to become, I instilled a secret poison into the dawning brightness of her eyes, well knowing that I should be resorted to one day for a remedy, and equally determined only to grant it on condition that I should receive May-flower in exchange, together with the treasures of the sorceress.

The curiosity of Pooh-pooh had fortunately conducted him to my abode, ere he betook himself to the court ; and from what I could perceive of his wit and the sentiments of his nature, I was induced to hope that were he to attempt the adventure, he might not be found unworthy of success. I con-

ceived a still higher opinion of him when I saw that he returned shortly after to consult me ; and he appeared in no way cast down at the things I asked for, in return for my assistance, notwithstanding my description of the perils which surrounded them. When I asked him if he knew of any one at the court bold enough to secure Radiant at such a price, he answered, " Excessive ambition, or excessive love, is all that is required to induce a man to undertake it ; and the mere hope of deserving your approval were enough to arm him against all dangers, with no other reward than that of glory."

I cannot tell you the joy I felt at receiving this answer from a man whom I was beginning to esteem ; and I now entertained no doubt that his was the hand appointed by the Fates for the deliverance of May-flower.

I allowed him to hope that my favour would not be wanting if he should determine on the undertaking, which I then described to him as far more dangerous than I had mentioned before, but without shaking him in his resolution. I kept my word ; and although it was not permitted me to be of assistance to him on all occasions, my genius frequently inspired his in the execution of his project. After all, however, it is to his presence of mind, his firmness, and above all, to his unswerving constancy, that all the glory is due.

While he was on his road to the sorceress's dwelling, I made use of the wand to satisfy my curiosity respecting May-flower. It gave a description of her sufferings amidst the wearisome occupations of her life, accompanied by a sketch of her face. The latter appeared to me capable of affording a rich recompence for all that might be undertaken for her sake. I thought it unnecessary to inspire Pooh-pooh's heart in her favour, if her mind and her sentiments answered to the charms of her person; but I confess that I communicated an impulse towards him in the heart of May-flower, which he could never have inspired at first sight, however he might have deserved it subsequently without any assistance of mine.

I was overjoyed when I knew that they were arrived in this kingdom, and although there was certainly some degree of cruelty in rendering my abode inaccessible, when he was about to bring May-flower thither, I did it in the intention of trying his constancy to the end, and to discover whether he indeed

deserved her. You have seen how this constancy triumphed over every temptation, and has won him the reward of ascending the throne of a princess who rules his heart with so perfect a sway.

I had for some time foreseen the revolution which was to occur in Circassia; but although I foresaw it, I was not permitted to prevent it; all that I could do was to save my sister the queen, and the three daughters that remained to her, from the extremity of a situation which exposed them to the fury of the tyrant; and in order to foil all pursuit of them, I provided a place of retreat almost entirely unknown, and situated on the confines of the kingdom.

It was here that, in the fear of their being still pursued, I cast a spell, by which the queen appeared in the shape of a crow whenever chance should happen to lead a stranger there, while her daughters and their companions assumed the appearance of magpies, without their being able to perceive this change in one another.

This is the illusion, princes, which occasioned you so much surprise when chance conducted you one after the other to their retreat.

At the time that Pooh-pooh and May-flower were vainly endeavouring to find me out, I was aware in what disguise Dentata had arrived hither, and her designs were also known to me; but I knew that her power was so limited since she had lost the mare and the hat, that I could easily ward off any attempts she might make on the life of my niece.

I delivered up May-flower accordingly to the cruel treatment which awaited her on her arrival, at the hands of the seneschal's widow and the inhuman Dentata. May-flower was destined to belong only to the most faithful of lovers, and what greater trial of his constancy could be made than exposing her to his eyes in the frightful and repulsive condition to which the malefices of the sorceress had reduced her, while at the same time he should be offered the hand of Radiant and the throne of Cashmere.

I did not long detain him when he returned with the shining hat and the mare, but I kept my promise concerning the remedy for the lovely eyes which were causing such ravage. Although Pooh-pooh was returned to his dear May-flower, nevertheless I

knew that, in the state in which he would find her, she would require more powerful assistance than he could afford.

I employed all the genii which I am enabled by my art to command, to watch over the safety of her life until my arrival, determining not to tarry long behind him. I deferred my journey to the last moment, and nearly had cause to repent it, for at the very moment I had mounted Jingle, the most agreeable and the most wished-for obstacle prevented my departure.

Three couriers from Circassia arrived within an hour one of the other, with the astounding intelligence that my sister was restored to her dominions. The first informed me that the usurper had perished in an insurrection as sudden as the revolution which had placed him on the throne, the other confirmed this intelligence, and added that the excited populace had not even spared his poor humpbacked daughter. The last, in fine, gave me ample details of the acclamations, the joy and the transports of impatience with which the queen and her daughters were expected in the capital of Circassia; and this last courier had been despatched by herself, the council and the nobles of the kingdom having already set out to meet her.

So you see, my lord, Pooh-pooh is not so ill married as you supposed, for however eager May-flower may be to see him seated on the throne of which his perfect love and inviolable fidelity have rendered him so worthy, she will find her dominions peaceable on her arrival, her mother and sister less tranquil from their impatience to receive a daughter and a sovereign whom they had so long lost, while the people, as usual eager for all change, will be ready enough to shower good wishes and benedictions on such a queen as May-flower.

Serena had no sooner ended her narrative, than the Caliph plunged into a maze of words in the endeavour to compliment her, and to make some apology to May-flower, from which however he was happily extricated by the announcement that dinner was served.

The banquet was the most superb that will ever again be seen, but seemed drawn out to an unconscionable length to the two princes, whose only food had been the glances of their respective brides.

At last the long-wished-for hour arrived, and Hymen kindled all his torches to light Phœnix to Radiant's apartment, where

the Caliph wished them good night ; while in the chamber which had been prepared for May-flower, it depended only on the most faithful of lovers to become the happiest of men.

Aurora had made her appearance long before the end of this story, but Dinarzade had treated her dawning brightness with the utmost contempt ; and the sultan, less eager than usual to take his place in the council, had allowed, for once, the sun to rise before him. The sultana, as the reader knows from the commencement of these tales, was the most beautiful sultana that was ever known ; he turned his eyes towards her with an impassioned look, while the vizier withdrew, carrying away the sceptre. It was as though he had never before seen her, so rapt was he in contemplating the charms of her countenance, and as he reflected that, together with all these beauties, she possessed a mind adorned with Arabian tales, he rose from beside her, and to show the warmth of his affection and regard, he put on his dressing-gown.

" Too happy," he exclaimed, " too happy are the shepherds of our plains, who can, without any violence to themselves, spend whole days sighing at the feet of their shepherdesses ! How great would be the pleasure of devoting every moment of my life to gazing on the lovely eyes that now shine on me."

Dinarzade, who was at a loss to discover the meaning of these tender ejaculations, and of the ceremony which preceded them, took the liberty of asking him what he meant by his shepherds and shepherdesses. " Return to your bed, my lord," she said, " instead of talking all this shallow stuff to a divinity to whom you were, but a moment since, giving your left toe to kiss." At the same time she tried to take his dressing-gown off, but he would not consent to quit it until she had brought him his lute, on which he played so long that the sultana was ready to die with weariness, and her sister with impatience. After this little burst of gallantry he passed into his apartment, and from his apartment to the council, to order the magnificent preparations for the rejoicings which were to take place on this important day, until the happy night should put him in possession of the most perfect of beauties. He awaited this night with impatience, as may well be imagined ; and when at last it came he repaired to the sultana's apartment, followed

by the officers of the crown, but instead of wishing them good night, after he had undressed himself, he turned to the Prince of Trebizond and commanded him to relate what adventures had befallen him since that of the Pyramid and the Golden Horse, up to the time when he beheld, for the first time, the beautiful eyes of Dinarzade at the bottom of the sea.

The enamoured prince would willingly have dispensed with a recital which could not but last the remainder of the night; but as he knew that his master, the sultan, was not to be trifled with, especially if a story was the business in hand, he began his, as will be seen in the sequel of this collection.

THE RAM.

TO MADEMOISELLE • • •

SAY how should I, who learning nougnt
From Phœbus or the sisters nine,
Know neither Helicon divine,
Nor in the Academy have wrought,
Of reason give you any jot
For the new name of Pont-Alie,
Or satisfy you what the lot
Of its ancient name may be.
Of musty etymology,
Its cant and phraseology,
Nought have I ever learnt or known ;
Yet your request shall be obey'd,
And here is all that Mabillon
Of a history has shown,
That Scaliger and Casaubon,
Would treat as spurious I 'm afraid ;
But little matters what is said
By men who, without mercy, judge
Alike the living and the dead ;
And others, while they criticise
With quirk and cavil, doubt and grudge,
Cause in the reader's sense to rise
A most contemptuous disdain
Both for their learning and their brain.
Yet, after all, if truth there be
In the following history,
Of fable it has such an air,
I make no doubt but you'll declare
That I have made for your diversion
Into its realms a short excursion.

Nathless, I have not borrowed it,
Nor stolen from Scheherazade ;
And if not sparkling with the wit
Of which that lady made parade,
The naked truth's simplicity
Will not be put in masquerade,
Or muffled in antiquity.
Before the story finds a close,
I can assure you, you shall see
A touch of actual sorcery ;
And eke shall note what cruel woes
Befel a fond and hapless fair.
A white fox and a siren fair,
Both cousins to a Lombard king,
Mere chance into my tale shall bring ;
And I may add, a giant tall
Will show himself. But this is all,
For I can swear, ere I begin it,
That you will find no genius in it.

Goddesses, who the stormy wind
Can turn to post-horse and postillion,
Whose charms fair Venus leave behind,
With all her ivory and vermillion ;
You who govern Cupid's flight,
Stronger than his wayward might ;
Who, swifter than the north-wind fly,
From sphere to sphere, athwart the sky,
Or in the hidden solitudes
Of your valleys and your woods,
Dance to songs the live-long night ;
And on the wings of butterflies
Despatch a sylph, from her distress
To rescue some fair shepherdess,
Who, pining far from love and light,
Imprison'd in a dungeon lies ;
Or scatter fears and jealousies,
And wrath, like idle mockeries,
Far from the bosom that they blight ;
Graceful fairies, calm and bright,

Whom the fairer sex has sung,
Grant me your kindness, and inspire
With all your sprightliness my lyre,
Since to record your deeds 'tis strung.

A hero once in times of yore—
Haughty and proud as he was long—
A giant, who was dreaded more
Than thunder by his vassal throng,
Was here of an estate possessed,
With a few mills and streamlets blessed,
To which his ancient race did owe
Their name and title—Moulineau.
This tenement, time out of mind,
Possessed by giants of his kind,
He thought it proper to entail
For ever on his issue male,
Deeming that, as he meant to marry,
He soon would have an heir to carry
To future times his height and face,
And so perpetuate his race,
Leaving an offspring, like in figure,
Perchance—who knows?—a little bigger.
At the bare rumour of this freak,
All blanch'd was many a beauty's cheek;
For what was fitter to appal them,
Than to reflect that such a lot
Might, by some accident, befall them?
Indeed 'twas frightful, was it not?
His face was terrible to see,
He went to bed all drest and booted,
His height and his brutality
In all respects were matched and suited;
The bellowing of bulls in fury
Was yet more tender than his voice,
Had scores of times more melody,
And made a score of times less noise.
Among his stud this giant counted
A huge machine made like a hack;
So huge, indeed, that on its back
E'en a Colossus might have mounted;

It served as cart or carriage horse,
For the pack-saddle or the course:
He had besides for an attendant
A ram of genius so transcendant,
He served him as his secretary,
His steward, and his equerry,
Looked to his mills, estate, and stable,
Kept his accounts, and served his table ;
With pretty fables, too, his mind was stored,
And he would tell them till the giant snored !

A Druid in his neighbourhood
Possessed a most romantic palace ;
With gardens where the crystal flood
Was lapt in deep and shady valleys ;
Here it bubbled, laugh'd, and leapt,
Coming to day's golden light ;
Here in voiceless silence slept,
Hidden in the shades of night :
Everywhere the greedy eye
Might a thousand charms descry.
Near each of two Eumenides
A Cerberus was crouching seen,
In silver wrought—foaming with spite ;
Here stood the mighty Hercules
In jaspar bright as starry night ;
And here the great Egyptian queen
Undaunted turned her closing eye
Upon the aspic's poison'd bite,
Preparing like a queen to die.
Nathless one ornament supreme
Peerless adorn'd these magic places,
A maid whose budding charms did seem
To cloud the witchery of the Graces ;
Wherever she her glances turned
Each heart with hopeless passion burned—
Hopeless, forsooth, for not a jot
Cared Alie in her scornful pride,
Whether they lived, or whether not,
Or if they hoped, or if they died.

The necromantic art entire,
Magic, and spell, and sorcery,
Was lavish'd by her Druid sire
To gift her charms with witchery,
And make her from her very birth
The marvel of admiring earth.
All beauties whom we now behold
Are cast upon this brilliant mould ;
But by mishap, 'tis manifest,
That not content with face and figure
They've also borrowed with the rest
Some of her cruelty and rigour.

A thousand lovers braved their doom,
And would in spite of death behold her.
It mattered not if in youth's bloom,
Or middle aged, or somewhat older ;
Age hopeless wept, youth lov'd and died
'Twixt morning's blush and even-tide—
Not one the tigress e'er escaped.
The neighbourhood for miles around
For princes slain with black was draped ;
Each day a lover dead was found,
Whose heart had caught the spark like tinder,
And burnt the victim to a cinder.

Proud of his stature, Moulineau
As canaille looked upon all those,
Who vanquished at a single blow
Their love and life together close ;
And in his coat of mail array'd
He came to woo the lovely maid.
He offered her his heart and hand,
His mills, his money, and his land,
And eke into the bargain throws
His horse to ride on when she chose.
If she refused, the monster vow'd
By all his Gods she'd feel his ire,
And then a heap of straw he show'd,
With which he said he meant to fire

Her pleasure-grounds and habitation,
Burning the lilies of her skin,
Its roses, and its jessamin,
In one terrific conflagration.
The beauty, with an air serene,
That might beseem an Eastern queen,
Array'd in all her matchless charms,
Leant o'er the walls with folded arms,
And call'd him "dwarf" to rouse his spleen.
The sea that winds conflicting lash ;
Jove's thunders, when at dead of night,
Upon some crazy tower they light,
And hurl it down with deaf'ning crash ;
A baited bear with dogs at strife ;
A hundred pigs beneath the knife ;
A hundred yelping curs or more,
Were nothing to the dreadful roar
That issued from the giant's throat,
And the resounding welkin smote.

You heard the outcry fierce and fell,
Meudon, St. Germain, and Rueil ;
Its echo troubled wave and sky,
And in his depths the gentle Seine
Concealed himself, lest once again
His ears might catch that fearful cry ;
And Pepin, you, who in that day,
Held over France your potent sway,
It was the second time that fright
Made your fair mother's cheek more white.
The tocsin sounded long and loud,
And from your hand the sceptre fell ;
At the dread sound, the wise heads vow'd,
It came so suddenly to tell
That soon would sound the trump of doom.
And you, too, Marli, wrapt in gloom,
Deep as the shadow of the tomb,
You also heard the horrid din ;
Dreaming at last the day was broke,
That should the glorious change begin,
Whereof prophetic Merlin spoke,

You thought that the triumphant hand,
 Which spell and charm should heap around you,
 Had in that very moment found you,
 And all your future splendour plann'd.
 As for you, nymph, who listened near,
 Turned paler than your smock with fear,
 Spite of your courage and your pride,
 You tried in vain your fears to hide,
 And changing countenance, your face
 Lost all its power of love and grace,
 While thus roared out your giant lover,
 With rage and anguish boiling over.

"Thou serpent, born of foul despite,
 Whose venom'd tongue would overcloud
 The fame for stature and for might
 Of which I am so justly proud !
 And so, I seem to you too small
 To hope to share your bed at all !
 Wretch ! by my inches do I swear
 Neither to pardon nor to spare ;
 Let all my soul its hate declare ;
 Heaping the straw and fuel higher
 Than ever yet for human fire,
 Here will I roast you and your sire."

He lit the fuel while he spoke,
 And o'er the castle rose the smoke.
 Bushes and trees from earth he tore,
 And to the burning heap he bore.
 The siege began, and mantlets
 Covered the enemy's approaches ;
 Sheltered behind the parapets,
 And armed with pokers, spits, and broaches,
 A crowd of servants brave the fight,
 While others seized with panic fright
 Ring out alarms with all their might :
 In front the palace these attack,
 And these invest it at the back.
 The nymph from whom all courage fled,

Now hied her to her chamber, where,
Upon her knees, beside her bed,
She pray'd in terror and despair.

Meanwhile her father throws around
The castle, rampart, wall, and doorway,
A gulph so mighty and profound,
'Twas broader than from Greece to Norway ;
The giant with a rearward hop
Took refuge on a mountain top,
Heaping with horrid imprecations
The Druid and his incantations.
When in the very nick of time
His faithful Ram, whose wit sublime,
Ne'er for a shift was at a loss
To aid his master, built across
The mighty stream a mightier bridge,
Stretching from the mountain ridge,
And first himself upon it leapt—
The giant then at once preparing
To finish his assault with daring,
Upon the arches boldly stept.

Over his books the Druid pondered,
More than a thousand thumb'd in vain,
And thinking somehow he had blunder'd,
He turn'd and thumb'd them o'er again.
Tome after tome away he toss'd,
And when the only book he miss'd
That could his present plight assist,
He cried, despairing, "All is lost ! "
Meanwhile the enemy advancing
Begin their triumph to exhibit,
The giant's eyes with fury glancing
Already threaten rope and gibbet,
While to the Druid thus he cries :
" Old fool ! who think yourself so wise,
Because of magic you've a smatter ;
Your walls about your ears I'll batter ;
And as for that proud minx your daughter,
Who slew with rigour all who sought her,

Soon better manners shall be taught her ;
And she who late with haughty scorning,
Looked on my figure and my face,
Shall now, my bridal bed adorning,
Enfold me in her soft embrace."

Then, turning to his worthy friend,
Quoth he, " Her necklace I intend
To give you as your share of booty,
And deeper still to wound the beauty,
For I must make her feel my rage,
Her sire shall wait on you as page."

But here we'll leave him for a moment,
And all his plans his rage to show meant ;
Perchance 'twould also wiser be
To quit the mazy fields of rhyme,
But how could we desert Alie
Just at so critical a time !
Amidst her present feuds and trouble,
The memory of former bliss,
And the dread future's dark abyss,
Together joined her grief to double ;
For of all cruel pangs that pierce her,
A woman knows of none that's fiercer
Than that she feels when he's away
Who doth her gentle spirit sway,
While still she's doomed to see before her
The object of her hate and horror.
Such was the maiden's state forlorn ;
For she whose heart from day to day
Seem'd filled with nought but hate and scorn,
In secret pined to love a prey.
Hence all her cruelty and pride,
Hence all the groaning and lamenting
Of those who saw her, lov'd and died,
Slain by her rigour unrelenting.
The God whom she in show defied,
The cause of all these dire distresses,
Ruled victor in her heart's recesses.
But this fond love, her only joy once,

Now caused her sorrow and annoyance,
For while the powers neeromantic
Her sire had summon'd to the fight,
Seem'd conquer'd by his foe gigantic,
Fate kept her lover from her sight.
He took, she thought, no earthly heed
Or of her troubles or of her,
Seeming his safety with her need
To balance, and the first prefer.
This base desertion of her swain,
Upon his truth so foul a stain,
Fill'd up the measure of her woes.
A stranger now to all repose,
She told her sad and pitous tale
To all the echoes of the vale ;
She gave no respite to the mountains,
Distracted drove the streams and fountains,
And of her hero, bored in vain,
For tidings, the enduring plain.
Tired of wandering through all
The chambers of her father's hall,
She hied her to the Vestal's grove,
Beneath an ancient cypress tree,
Where to the sorrows of her love
She gave an utterance full and free.
And as in ancient days we're told,
Swains wold their tales of love unfold
To sounding lute and drumming tabor,
Telling their woes with tuneful labour ;
And maidens even now express
In music their extreme distress,
The fair one following the fashion,
Sang to the object of her passion—
No list'ner being there to stop her—
Rondo from the last new opera.

Oh, Prince of Noisy, charming lover !
Sole choice this loving heart doth own,
Deaf when all else their flames discover,
My bosom's true to thee alone.

Oh, Prince of Noisy, faithless rover,
 Worst choice my doating heart could own,
 When by a giant overthrown,
 A thousand dangers round me hover,
 Should now thy faithlessness be shown.
 Oh, Prince of Neisy, faithless rover !
 In vain I call thee, heart of stone,
 Worst choice my wounded heart could own.

And at these words a flood of tears
 Upon her sorrowing cheek appears ;
 Thrice were its lilies inundated,
 And thrice the flood of grief abated ;
 Thrice was the lustre of her visage paled,
 And thrice her flagging pulses failed ;
 When from a neighbouring grove there sigh'd
 A voice whose tones her life restore,
 While from her heart the crimson tide
 Bears roses to her cheek once more.

Thus spoke the voice :—“ Fair Alie hear
 Thy lover, nor of wrongs accuse him,
 Whose heart ne'er other chains can wear
 Than thine ; no more thy faith refuse him,
 My faithful, kind, adored Alie,
 Of my fond heart the happy choice ;
 Thy charms, thy loving tenderness,
 Think'st thou could e'er forgotten be.
 Or cease this bosom to rejoice.
 For other woes keep thy distress,
 Not even cruel fate's decree,
 My faithful heart from thee could sever,
 More loved than life—more loved than ever.”

As thus she heard, surpris'd, alarm'd,
 Yet by a hope new dawning charm'd,
 Swiftly to the spot she bounds
 From whence the soft persuasive sounds
 Of that dear voice had tranced her ear,
 And bade her heart no longer fear.

“ Where hidest thou,” she cried, “ my dear ? ”
 Once more, beloved one, appear,
 My drooping spirit to rejoice ;
 Or of my lov’d and loving swain
 Does nought remain now but a voice ?
 Why make me seek thee thus in vain ?
 Why, when my soul is yearning, fly me ?
 When with such ardour I entreat
 Thy worshipp’d presence, why deny me ?
 Art chang’d, then, to a parakeet ? ”
 When bootless all she found her pray’r,
 Yielding to anguish and despair,
 Her love made havoc of her wits.
 A prey to moods and gloomy fits,
 Amidst her reason’s thousand flights,
 She thought herself—so strange her fate—
 A heroine of the Arabian Nights—
 A book which she’d devour’d of late ;
 Imagining, that she a victim
 Had fall’n to a tyrant grim,
 Who finding out one wife had trick’d him,
 Now part from vengeance, part from whim,
 A spick-span new one daily wedded,
 Whom in the morning he beheaded ;
 And lying down beneath the shade
 Afforded by a wooded tuft,
 She thought her spouse beside her laid,
 And her memory being stuft
 With this Arabian balderdash,
 She thought that she, to save her head,
 Must tell her lord some kind of trash ;
 And thus by wandering fancy led,
 Began the tale with sorrows rife,
 To tell of her eventful life :

“ I daughter am of Pharabert,
 Sprung from the royal stock of France,
 Whose great-grandfather, Dagobert,
 In magic learned and expert,
 And to a fault in every chance

And turn of life political,
Deem'd it expedient—nay, most critical—
A certain bower of green should be
Provided for my infancy,
Foreseeing that those regions bright,
The resting-place of innocence,
A certain count—Phillibert hight—
One day would make his residence.
Protected by a wizard skill'd,
Whose brain with plots and plans was fill'd,
This hero, after a career
Of weary toil, was destin'd here,
His wild and wand'ring course to end ;
And though the world he 'd not abjure,
In calm enjoyment he would spend
His days, from all its ill secure.
A chamber built beneath the ground
As ancient tombs, not so profound,
His fears would quell and bid him smile
At bars, and bolts, and durance vile.
In summer, when we 're all afloat,
And woo the breeze in barge or boat,
He in a car that spurned the aid
Of horse or mule, would promenade
His lakes and gardens free from care.
For him did Dagobert prepare,
The happy charm that threw around
This place a mystery profound,
And which he only could unravel.
Meanwhile my childhood fleeted by,
And rumours soon began to travel
Of wondrous charms, which whether I
Possess or not, great heaven knows ;
But soon they brought about my dwelling
A train of swains with raptures swelling,
And with them a long train of woes.

“ In vain they sigh'd, in vain they pester'd ;
My heart in blissful peace sequester'd,
At all their bootless efforts smil'd,
While they with dying breath reviled,

And call'd me monster, wretch inhuman.
 This heart so tameless once, and wild,
 Alas ! soon prov'd me but a woman ;
 For miles around all mouths were fill'd
 With tales of all the men I'd kill'd,
 Till cruel love incens'd at last
 To see me thus his power despise,
 Resolved the fatal chains to cast
 In which my heart now captive lies.
 Beneath the neighbouring forest's shade
 Its jocund course a streamlet speeds,
 And plunging in a lovely glade,
 The fount with liquid crystal feeds,
 Where, by vain hope my sire allured,
 In leafy walls my childhood mured.
 Here in this lovely spot seclnded,
 Whither no living mortal, save
 Of my own sex, had e'er intruded,
 I went in the clear stream to lave.
 When lo ! it chanced that one fair morning,
 As I that fount half-naked entered,
 Appeared before me, without warning,
 He in whom now my love is centred—
 More beauteous than the Eastern ray
 That flushes from awakening day.

“ But yonder in the East behold
 The gates beginning to unfold,
 Where the bright sun will soon appear,
 And sally forth on his career,
 And his vaunt courier's lustrous ray
 Heralds the splendour of the day.
 Adieu, then, dearest Dinarzade,
 Soon now the sultan will prepare him
 To take his morning promenade,
 For when 'tis day I seem to scare him ;
 Yet of my story what's to follow,
 You'd find beats all I've told you hollow,
 But that to-morrow, woe is me,
 Your loving sister you will see

For the last time upon a litter,
Borne to a doom unjust and bitter."

As thus she spake, sweet sleep descending,
Began her drooping lids to close,
And all her foolish visions ending,
Cradled her senses to repose.
Meanwhile, her sire opprest with fear,
Seeking his idol high and low,
Discovered her quite *à propos*
Her final words to overhear ;
And as he listened with amaze, he
Made up his mind that she was crazy.

Spirit, whose hand with ease is trained
Over the corded lyre to sweep,
With linked harmony sustained,
Whose will doth teach the foward rhyme,
Obedient when thou bidst—to keep
To every measure, touch, and time,
Be't ode or ballad, jig or reel,
Or the fantastic vaudeville ;
Who to all tunes that ere existed,
Though ne'er so intricate and twisted,
Canst, without doing violence
To rules of grammar or to sense,
In philosophie vein or witty,
Sing of the court or of the city,
And hast for ev'ry chance a ditty ;
Come rescue Alie from her plight,
The wand'rings of her madness fellow,
And, in the absencee of Apollo,
Sustain me in my feeble flight.
My weary wits too long I've spun,
And nigh my tether have outran ;
Then grant the favour that I ask,
And entering fresh upon the task,
The matter that remains untold,
To your unfetter'd fancy mould,
And bring the story to a close.

Sadly your polish'd line it lacks,
'Twas cruel of you to impose
Upon me so severe a tax.
Can you refuse my boon to grant ?
Alas ! I know how stern your nature ;
Your heart encased in adamant,
Was ne'er moved yet by living creature ;
Whate'er to serve you were his zeal,
Whatever pangs condemn'd to feel ;
Trifles your haughty sense offend,
And you are anxious I should end.

But let me change my style ; 'tis time
Your wearied ears should find repose
From the dull accents of my rhyme,
And refuge take in common prose.
When on the winged horse astraddle,
An author takes an airy trip,
To hold the rein or sit the saddle,
Unskill'd alike—his steed will slip
The bit between his teeth, and shying,
Across the country take him flying.
But with his subject when he palters
And takes to trotting—out of breath,
While at each step he gibbs and falters,
To follow him we're bored to death.
Whate'er the grace of ornament
On a long-winded story spent,
From dulness nothing ere can save it.
When from Dame Poetry we have it,
No tale attains its termination ;
For though she rattles on apace,
She tortures her imagination,
Her subject at each step to grace :
Now to adorn a palace stopping,
Then off to distant regions hopping ;
Of tropes and metaphors in search,
Or some such other far-fetch'd lumber,
Leaving her reader in the lurch,
Buried long since in blissful slumber.

Matters being as I have the honour of informing you, I will now, in the true language of fairy tale, endeavour to send you to sleep, Mademoiselle, with the conclusion of the present history. You will be pleased, then, to recall to mind the astonishment of the Druid when he beheld the extraordinary bridge which was built over his river; but before we proceed further, it is proper that I should apprise you that with respect to the breadth of the aforesaid river, and the length of the bridge across it, I have been guilty of a slight exaggeration to the extent of half a dozen leagues or so, no less for the purpose of effect than for the sake of the rhyme, and moreover that the Lord of Moulineau, far from being so gigantic a fellow as you might be led to believe him from my description, was at the utmost no bigger than about twice the size of our friend B—.

The Druid, who with a view to protect his castle and his daughter from attack, had, by way of pastime, surrounded them with a moat filled with water, was affected with no other feeling than surprise on beholding the result of an enchantment adverse to his own; for he thought himself in a position to snap his fingers at all the bridges and all the giants in the world. He was only troubled to guess by whom this bridge could have been raised, for he knew very well that his neighbour Moulineau was anything but a conjuror. Accordingly he began thumbing over his books to set the whole matter clear, and bring the bridge down in less time than was taken to put it up. When he found that all the books he consulted could tell him nothing at all about it he was in a sad dilemma; but when he came to miss the one which contained all the secrets of his art, he had almost gone clean out of his wits. He had forbidden his daughter to read it (the only thing he had ever forbidden her), and submissive as she had always been to his least wishes, he was nevertheless afraid that the temptation to do a thing which had been expressly forbidden her had outweighed her obedience.

It was under this apprehension that he had sought and found her in the condition we left her in, and directly he perceived that her wits were wandering, he made no doubt but she had found his book. He awoke her in order to learn what she had done with it, but it was to make a disclosure of a very

different kind that Alie addressed him. From the manner in which she had fallen asleep, I could have sworn that on awaking she would have addressed the Druid as "Mighty commander of the faithful"—but her distraction took a different turn, and throwing herself at his feet :

"Father," she said, "I have lost it, and if you cannot restore it to me you will see me die of despair. For I can now no longer conceal my weakness, nor dissemble my crime. Yes, I have lost it."

"What!" cried the Druid, "you have not only disobeyed me, Alie, but you have lost that which, next to yourself, was dearest to me in the world. How did you lose the book upon which the happiness or the misery of our lives depends?"

Alie, struck with astonishment, replied, after being silent for a moment, "Dearest father, since you are aware of this loss, you must also know the way in which it occurred. Alas! it is but too true, in losing that book I lost a treasure which should have been dearer to me a thousand times than life." So saying, she left her father and hastened to shut herself up in her apartment.

The Druid was unable to follow his daughter; he was so enraged and confounded at the double avowal she had just made, that he could not tell where he was. All tended to persuade him that the curiosity of his daughter had been awakened in more than one way. In order to satisfy his doubts, he resolved to consult his favourite, Puncheon. Now this same Puncheon was a little gnome, the son of a fairy, or if you will, of a sylph; for the Druid was the greatest, the most skilful, in short the master of all cabalists. Accordingly he went straight to the statue of Cleopatra, and touching it with a talisman which he carried about him in a ring, it opened, and Puncheon his favourite came out. He was the most charming little fellow in the world; his dress was made of parrots' feathers of all manner of colours, he wore a pointed hat turned up with a large diamond, and a collar of rubies. Although he was not more than a cubit in height, never was shape more graceful or nobler than his; and his face was, to say the least, quite as handsome and amiable in its expression as that of the fair Alie. All these attractions, however, were exceeded by the kindness of his heart. He was alarmed at

the air of severity with which, for the first time in his life, the Druid received him. He could pretty well guess, however, what was the cause of it, and he approached him with trembling limbs and eyes filled with tears. "Come," said the Druid, "and render an account of thy conduct. Did I charge thee with the guardianship of my daughter that thou mightest abandon her to caprices which have lost and dishonoured her?"

Poor little Puncheon was so moved at this reproach, that there is no heart but would have melted at the spectacle of his excessive affliction. He threw himself prostrate on the ground, and embracing with his little hands as much as he could grasp of his master's legs about the ankles, he remained some time moistening them with his tears ere he could speak. Rising, at last, at the Druid's command, and drawing from his pocket an embroidered kerchief which his mother had worked for him, he wiped his eyes, and spoke as follows :

"My lord and master, I will make a true and sincere confession of my fault ; my repentance of which is as deep as your kindness deserves ; and when I have confessed all, if you do not find me worthy of pardon, kill me at once, rather than let me suffer pangs worse than a thousand deaths, such as I now endure, at these marks of your indignation. I have not forgotten all that I owe you. You have delivered me from the necessity of living in the bowels of the earth ; you have endowed me with an agreeable form ; and leaving me all the knowledge which is possessed by creatures of my kind, you have joined additional acquirements to it which place me far above my fellows ; you have fixed my abode amidst the charming regions which stretch far away beneath the statue from which I have just issued. But my sovereign lord, you know also, that these benefits are not exempt from certain mortifying circumstances, for I am only visible when you desire it ; the use of speech, too, is denied me without your permission ; and in the magnificent apartments which I inhabit, I am condemned to watch over a treasure which I am not permitted to behold ; moreover, I can never leave the statue but when you are pleased to unfold the doors of my dwelling,—a charming one I own,—but which I cannot endure while it continues to be my prison. You have commanded me in my hours of liberty, to follow

everywhere the beautiful Alie, to guard her from all dangers, and to protect her from any unforeseen accident that might disturb her repose. You know with what zeal I discharged this duty in the commencement, and how punctually I obeyed a command which has cost me many a tear. While following the course of the small stream branching from the cataracts of the Nile, and which, after winding a long time through flowery meadows, forms the fountain of Alie's bower, I threw into it the little ivory ball you gave me. It was to increase her charms, although this appeared impossible; but I soon discovered that you had had a very different design.

"As soon as the festival of the mistletoe was come, which is attended by all the inhabitants of the surrounding country, your daughter made her appearance there in the dress of a shepherdess; no sooner did she show herself, than all the most distinguished shepherds fell in love with her, followed her hither, frequently repeated their visits, and having declared their passion to her, and experienced her rigour by a thousand tokens of contempt and aversion, bade her farewell in songs of the most touching tenderness, took to their beds and died.

"Shortly after, a magnificent tournament was held at the Barrières de St. Denis, at which the flower of our good King Pepin's knights were to maintain at the point of their lances, that the Princess Hermenegesilda, his niece, was the loveliest princess in the universe. You sent thither the divine Alie, accompanied by four sylphs, who had assisted at her toilet, and waited on her in the capacity of maids of honour. When the king beheld Alie, he was dazzled with her beauty, while the princess, his niece, who was seated at the foot of his throne, blushed scarlet with shame and mortification. It was not without sufficient cause that she did so, for only a small number of the older courtiers ranged themselves on the side of her beauty; all the heroes declared for Alie; the Baron d'Argenteuil, the Vidame de Gonesse, the Chatelain de Vau-girard, and the Seneschal de Poissy, entered the lists in favour of Alie, and having carried the day, accompanied her hither. You treated them as magnificently as your daughter treated them scurvily. As for me, inclining to them as I did on account of their youth, their valour, and their handsome looks, I made no doubt but Alie would make choice of one among

them, and that we should soon see one of these noble lords the happy possessor of all her charms. But I was mistaken. While thus over head and ears in love, they were contending against the repulses of Alie, and wasting away with vain longing, the king caused a proclamation to be published by sound of trumpet, summoning them to appear before him, and answer for the insult they had done to the first princess of the blood ; and as they were not forthcoming, he had sentenced them all to be hanged ; but the cruel Alie spared them so ignominious an end, by causing them to die of despair. I wept with grief at their fate, especially at that of the Vicomte de Gonesse, a gentleman of great promise, and who seemed to inspire you with some degree of pity. I repented then, that I had thrown the ivory ball into the fountain of the bower, not doubting but it was that which caused the pitiless hatred of Alie against all her lovers. Nevertheless, I perceived that you were not satisfied with its effects, notwithstanding all the tragical deaths it had caused, and that you had some particular victim in your eye who was not forthcoming. Of this I became certain when you commanded me to take the form of a roebuck, and to wander in the forest surrounding the magnificent palace of Noisy. I obeyed you with reluctance, fearing that it was to lure some unfortunate wretch into the snares of Alie's beauty. As soon as I had reached the middle of the forest, I heard a loud clamour of dogs and hunting-horns ; it was a wolf hunt. He seemed a large and dauntless one ; for although he was hard pressed, as soon as he saw me, he made a dart at me on his way, but I leapt up in the air, and he passed beneath me. As soon as the leaders of the pack caught sight of me, they quitted the scent of the wolf to follow mine. I had changed myself into a very pretty roebuck, and was as swift as the wind ; I allowed the dogs to come near me as I had done with the wolf, and when they thought they had me, in three leaps I was out of sight. They followed me with the most clamorous cries ; I waited for them again ; their master was close at their heels, and when he saw me halt, called them off. I allowed him to approach me, as he seemed to intend me no harm ; and I merely walked slowly on, as though to lead him away from his troop of followers ; he seemed to guess my intentions, for he dismissed his hunting

suite at once. When I saw that he was alone, I laid myself down on the grass, and he began to contemplate me with great attention, and, as I thought, with a kind of pleasure ; for my part I was so charmed with his good looks, his well-proportioned figure and graceful carriage, that I could have spent my whole life in admiring him.

"When he had gazed on me for some time, he exclaimed : 'What a beautiful little animal ! What would I give to have it in my menagerie ! Poor little roebuck,' he continued, 'there you might rest in peace, secure from all the dangers that threaten you in the forest. Were I not afraid to scare you, I would alight from my horse to—'

"Ere he had finished speaking, we heard the cry of another pack of hounds. As they came gradually nearer and nearer, they seemed to be cheered on by some bull, which was not very far from the truth, for it was the giant Moulineau, who, mounted on his huge horse, was making the earth tremble beneath him, and shaking the air with his loud bellowings. He no sooner caught sight of me than he set all his horrid dogs upon me, and even launched a javelin at me, which nearly rent a tree close behind me in two. The handsome huntsman was indignant at this act, and reproached the giant with his barbarity, at which the cruel monster was so transported with rage that, glancing at him with an infuriated eye, he launched another javelin at him as long as a lance, but which passed over his head, for the giant was fortunately as awkward as he was brutal and powerful. The handsome huntsman drew his sword on the instant, and darting towards him while yet his head was bent over his horse by the effort of throwing, dealt him so furious a back-handed blow on the top of his head, that it sounded as though it had fallen on an anvil. It stretched him senseless on the ground, although he was not wounded, and put an end to a combat which had made me tremble for my generous defender.

"Friendship and gratitude prevailing over me, I could not persuade myself to betray him to certain death by leading him to the fountain of the bower. Seeing, therefore, that he was following me, I began to run, but in an opposite direction to the fatal fountain. Nevertheless, when I had had a good run, I suddenly perceived that we were already beneath the first of

the large trees, whose thick foliage shelter it from the beams of the sun. The lovely Alie was then bathing ; all at once it occurred to my mind how many lovers had perished for only beholding her visage, and persuaded that my dear defender had but a few moments more to live, I began to shed tears.

"When your daughter became aware of the presence of a man so near the fountain, she gave a loud scream. The sylphs who had been assisting her to undress, took flight, and buried themselves in the wood. For my part, I was in despair at the sad result of my adventure, and concealed myself behind a bush, that I might witness the tragical end to which I had brought the most kind-hearted of men. I was not long, however, in this cruel suspense. After gazing for some time upon Alie, I saw him draw near the fountain. Alie's eyes had been continually fixed on him from the first moment of her surprise ; but it was no longer with one of those glances of mingled scorn and aversion with which she had slain all her former lovers. Meanwhile it was evident that the handsome huntsman was no less captivated by her appearance, and I was overwhelmed with joy when I observed that he was none the worse for it. It was true I had had an example of this in the case of the giant Moulineau, who was certainly as deeply smitten as such a brute could be ; but I always suspected that he had not brains enough to die for love. At last the handsome huntsman respectfully addressed Alie, and said several things which, for a first interview, were very loving indeed. The answers she made him were by no means barbarous or cruel ; and never was I more pleased than to see two such charming persons so soon strike up an acquaintance.

"If you be not the queen of the Gods, or the mother of Cupid," said he, "tell me, I pray, what mortal creature is it who shares their lustre and their majesty, and I will adore no other being upon earth."

"And you," replied Alie, "if you be not that very Cupid whereof you speak, who then can you be ? But be you whosoever you may, not only do I receive your homage, but I promise you that I will receive no other ; so you be not the Prince of Noisy."

"Wretch !" cried the Druid, interrupting Puncheon, "what name hast thou sounded in my ears ? The Prince of

Noisy, that man whom I detest no less than the Ram ! But proceed, and let me hear the rest of this fatal conversation."

"It was continued," said the faithful Puncheon, "by the handsome huntsman acknowledging himself to be no other than this Prince of Noisy. This announcement threw Alie into a state of embarrassment, and for a few moments she was lost in reflection ; at the end of which, however, she was in the same mind as before. And how could it be otherwise, when the Prince of Noisy solemnly swore that he adored, and that he could not live without seeing her ! She told him to come on the third night from that day, to the margin of the same fountain, to pluck one of those yellow flowers which he saw there, and following the course of the streamlet, to proceed to the waters of the Nile, where she should expect him ; after which she bade him retire. He obeyed, solemnly protesting that he would worship her till death."

"And what didst thou ?" said the Druid, "the while thou heardst all this."

"I ?" replied Puncheon ; "I congratulated myself that I had so exactly executed your designs, and had brought to your daughter the very man whom you seemed to wish for. No, my good master, at that time I was not guilty ; it was afterwards that I offended, and I will tell you how. After casting aside the appearance of a roebuck, I hastened to seek you out, eager to relate all that had occurred. When I appeared before you, I was anticipated by your reproaches of my negligence in not delivering up your mortal enemy to all the fury of your resentment, by exposing him to the eyes and to the hatred of Alie. I wanted no more at once to perceive, that if you knew how matters had really fared, you would have killed us all three ; and it was in this fear that I told you I had only met with the giant Moulineau, who had attempted to kill me. I promised to do better another time, and assured you I would never rest until I had brought you the object of all your hatred. You will remember with what eagerness you once more commanded me to do so. As I knew full well that he would come without my troubling myself to seek him, two days after I took the shape of a stag, but instead of setting out to lure the Prince of Noisy, whose mind was bent on far other things than the chase, I presented myself before the giant, who had taken the field

with all his hunting train. I seemed to him the largest and finest stag of the forest, and he at once began a furious pursuit of me. I determined to lead him a chase to his heart's content. My first halt was at Montmartre, where I waited for him on the top of the hill, and when he had reached the place where I was, to the infinite regret of his great elephant of a horse, he stopped to draw breath. I had halted, and the dogs thought I was at bay ; he urged them to attack me, and I killed him four of them in a moment. I then darted off down the side of the hill, he hotly pursuing me. I leaped over a quarry-pit, half covered over with brambles, into which he and his unwieldy beast pitched headlong, and narrowly escaped a broken neck. He was extricated, with some difficulty, and seeing that I was only running at a trotting pace before him, he made up his mind to have his revenge. I brought him back to Noisy, where I swam the river, he leaping into it from the steepest part of the bank, which I had on purpose selected ; and were there such a thing as a river deep enough to drown him, he would infallibly have perished.

" At last, after reducing him to a state of despair, I buried myself in the depths of the forest, and then returned to tell you that I had been hunted by a young man of surpassing beauty ; but that whenever I had attempted to lead him towards the fountain of the cradle, he had always checked himself, and taken another road. You were at no trouble to believe this ; and if you remember, you told me it was useless to think more of it, and that you could see he was protected by Merlin, the enchanter. That day you did not shut me up, because you wished me to watch over the gardens and the castle during the night, as you had some other duty for the usual watch to perform.

" I was delighted to have this task allotted me, for I had a great curiosity to witness an interview which would naturally be of a most tender and agreeable nature. As soon as the night was fairly set in, the fair Alie crossed the parterre and found the prince where she had expected she would yet have sometime to wait for him, and brought him back into the garden. I followed them step by step wherever they walked, and my invisibility removing the constraint which my presence would have occasioned, I heard the Prince of Noisy give

utterance to all that the most tender and the most respectful love inspires under such circumstances, and which was answered by all that innocence allows a heart moved with extreme tenderness to express. After spending the first moments in mutual expressions of affection, Alie sighed. The prince was troubled at this sigh, and asked her what had caused it. Alie told him that she feared she should not be able to overcome all the difficulties and obstacles which must infallibly cross him in his designs. She spoke to him of the giant's persecution and his threats ; adding that she made no account of them however, and that he was a monster for whom she only felt disgust and contempt, without doing him the honour of hating him. She told him, moreover, that although you loved her more dearly than your life, you would never consent to her marriage, because you had discovered by her horoscope, that it would be fatal to her so long as the Prince of Noisy was among living men ; that it was for that reason that you had armed her heart with a hatred which had proved fatal to all who had loved her, as an example to others, and to rid you from the importunity of suitors ; that he was therefore the sole object of your fears and of your persecution, and that she knew you would use every means to destroy him.

" As she uttered these last words, the fair eyes of Alie became suffused with tears ; the Prince of Noisy threw himself at her feet and told her he was not worthy the smallest of those drops ; and that he would esteem it a greater happiness to die adoring her than to live for another. These tender speeches only added to her tears and affliction. At last they parted, after taking heaven to witness that they would never cease loving each other. Although they have frequently met since, I swear upon your sacred head that every interview past as innocently as though yourself had been present. For my part, knowing that nothing is concealed from you when you choose to learn it, I thought you were informed of all that had taken place, believing that you allowed it for some secret reason of your own.

" In fine, the last day they saw each other, Alie appeared a thousand times more beautiful than usual, from the joy that was in her heart. It was amidst the transports of this joy that she informed the Prince of Noisy she had found that

which would secure their happiness, but that whatever danger one or the other incurred by it, he must follow her into the castle in order to learn what he had to do. She entered first, bidding him not follow her until half an hour had elapsed; but the impatience of the Prince of Noisy so shortened this half hour that at the end of a few minutes he ran with eagerness to the door which seemed to be standing open. Nevertheless he could never succeed in entering, for now it would rise above him, then sink down below him; at one time it shifted to the right, at another to the left, and so went on eluding all his attempts till another half hour was spent in addition to that already enjoined him. Alie, impatient at his delay, appeared at the window, and seeing the prince, asked him in a fretful tone why he had not followed her. When she was apprised of the obstacle which opposed his entrance, she came down to assist him, but the same thing befel her from within, as he had encountered from without. She returned to the window, and after telling him that he had been too hasty, she bade him stand exactly beneath the window until she should come back. A moment after she returned with a book, and told the prince hurriedly not to open it in any other place than where the leaf was folded down. She then gently dropt it, while he stretched his hand up to receive it, but a gust of wind suddenly rising blew it on one side and caused it to fall on the head of one of the silver dogs. As soon as it had touched it, a long howling sound was heard, and the earth trembled; the prince lost no time in picking up the book and making his escape; but from that day to this he has never been seen either by myself or Alie. She had nigh gone distracted at it, and you yourself would have been moved with pity, as I have been so often, to see her walking alone through all the places where they had been together, and, after calling upon them a hundred times to restore him to her, accuse him of perfidy, inconstancy, and treachery, or fall to weeping his death in so piteous a manner that it would have made any body's heart bleed to hear her. It was at about this time that you conceived so bitter a hatred for the giant's ram, of which you heard such extraordinary stories, and whose ministry has occasioned you so much trouble, and is the cause of your present state of embarrassment."

"I have already told you," continued little Puncheon, "that whatever shape I assumed, and whatever industry I employed, I have never been able to penetrate into the abode of the giant to execute your orders, nor to learn who or what this singular ram can be. A secret power rendered me motionless as soon as I was within a certain distance, and only permitted me to retrace my steps. This, my beloved master and sovereign, is a sincere and full confession of the offences I have committed against you, and I submit myself to all the punishment you may be pleased to inflict on me for their expiation, provided I am not banished from the favour of your countenance. As I have offended you, however, by concealing those things of which I ought to have apprised you, I will inform you of something which may perhaps prove of some use. Know then that the Prince of Noisy must be somewhere in the neighbourhood; for although he has not been seen, he has this very day spoken to Alie: even had I not recognised him by his voice, what he said to her places the fact beyond all doubt, and this I imagine it is which has thrown her into the state in which you found her."

Poor little Puncheon having finished his recital, remained silent, and threw himself once more flat upon the ground to beg pardon for his offence. The Druid, who loved him, after severely reprimanding him, though in a very gentle tone, granted him a free pardon. He then told him that it was evident he had more than one enemy to fear, that he was but too well assured there was a design upon his subterraneous treasure, and shutting him up again in the statue, bade him watch over it with more care and more zealously than ever.

While these things are going on within the castle, we must throw a glance upon the doings of the besiegers without. We have made noise enough in verse on the subject of their attack, and the fears of Alie when she witnessed the assault; but you will be pleased not to lay much stress on all this, it is the mere license of poetry. There is, however, no doubt but that the enamoured Moulineau, whose chief occupation was smoking badgers and foxes in their holes, had lit up a bundle or so of straw at the foot of the wall from which his mistress had insulted him, in the hope of revenging himself by stifling her: but it is still more certain that he had

turned tail the moment he saw the sudden kind of inundation with which the Druid had deluged the castle. It is also a fact, however, that he had taken courage again at seeing the bridge which his ram had thrown over this little torrent, and if I be not mistaken, on this bridge did we leave them both, the while the giant was giving vent to a multitude of threats. He made up his mind the place was theirs when he saw the Druid deserting his post to betake himself to his library. But his ram held him back upon the bridge at the moment he was calling out for ladders to scale the walls. He told him that the Druid had not retired from fear ; that this retreat was the mask of some cunning device ; that even should he get into the very heart of the place he would not be one jot advanced ; that it was full of armed statues, which he could animate at his pleasure, and that there were especially two silver dogs at his door, the least of which could strangle an entire army if once it were let loose on them ; it was his advice therefore that they should withdraw, seeing moreover that night was fast approaching, and when they reached their own quarters they should hold a council as to what was to be done.

The giant, who easily allowed himself to be governed when there was danger in sight, betook himself with all possible expedition to his abode. They had supper before holding their council, and after supper Moulineau would hear of no business, for he had eaten enough for three wolves, and drunk enough for three sturdy sots. Accordingly he threw himself into a large easy chair, and thus addressed the ram :

“ By the way, how is it that you, who are only a senseless animal, can speak as well as I, and better ? ”

“ I will tell you with pleasure,” replied the ram. “ You know that the souls of all men pass after death into the body of some animal, and then, some time after, into the body of another man ? ”

“ Of a truth,” said the giant, “ never did such a notion enter my head. For instance, now, what animal could I have been ? ”

“ You,” said the ram, “ you were an ant.”

He had no sooner uttered the word than the giant, who could abide nothing worse than being likened to anything small, and who more than once had like to have revolted

from the charms of the divine Alie, because she was only taller by a foot than my ladies, your elder sisters, rose, and laying his hand on the hilt of his horrible scimitar, exclaimed : " Miserable lambkin, I know not what withholds me from sending your head, with its two cursed horns, flying ten leagues from me." The ram, who was not a whit afraid of him, nevertheless pretended to be seized with fear, knelt down before him, and kissed the earth three times in token of humiliation ; and seeing the giant was somewhat pacified by this action, he rose again and continued thus :

" If your highness could only read, you would soon see that I have said nothing but what was strictly true. And if fate at one time so far wronged you as to enclose so magnanimous a soul and so vast a mind in the body of a creature so diminutive, doubtless it will repair the injury by making you, as soon as you are dead, a dromedary, then an elephant, and, in the course of a few years, a whale."

The giant, charmed with the brilliant prospect unfolded to him, held out his hand for his confidant to kiss, threw himself back into his easy chair, and, to drive away the unpleasant considerations suggested by metempsychosis, commanded him to divert his mind with some agreeable tale. After musing for some time, the ram began thus :

" From the time the white fox had received his wounds, the queen never failed to pay him a visit every day."

" My woolly friend," said the giant, interrupting him, " not a word of all this do I comprehend. If you would have the kindness to begin by the beginning I should feel obliged to you, for I have always found that stories which begin thus in the middle, have no other effect than that of throwing the mind into a state of hopeless confusion."

" Well," said the ram, " I consent, though it be against custom, to put everything in chronological order ; the beginning of my story, therefore, shall be placed foremost."

STORY OF PERTHARITES AND FERANDINA.

There was once a king of Lombardy who was the ugliest man in his kingdom, and his wife the most beautiful woman in the universe ; but to make up the balance he was the best

of all husbands and she the most curst of shrews. Not only did she never allow him to approach her, but she would not suffer him even to look at her; notwithstanding which she would never cease rating him because they had no children. He had a son and a daughter by a former marriage, who were adored throughout the kingdom, no less than they were hated and tyrannised over by their cruel step-mother. Although her heart was proof against all tender emotion, she was so jealous of her beauty, that if she heard by chance of any young person possessed of charms, and who had dared appear in public and be admired, she immediately caused her to be carried off; and indeed it was quite a sight to see her maids of honour, so insurpassable was their ugliness. The king, on the contrary, certainly the most ill-favoured man nature ever formed, took a pleasure in seeing none but the handsomest and best made men about him; but he had all the pains in the world to keep them by him, so provoked were they at the repulsive creatures composing the queen's retinue.

In spite of every mark of contempt and hatred daily heaped upon him by her, the king was so fondly in love with her that he allowed her to do whatever she chose. She was mistress absolute of his kingdom and of his subjects; and this unjust power was even extended over his children. The poor princess had to suffer cruelly for the misfortune of being as beautiful as her jealous step-mother: she was confined to an attic at the top of the palace, where no one dared pay their court to her. The queen had given her a fury for a governess; she was an old humpbacked hag, who, after scolding her all day, would wake her up at night to load her with fresh abuse. Her whole study was to spoil her figure by making her wear clothes made expressly for that purpose, and to dull her complexion by every kind of villainous tricks. No gentler creature ever breathed than was this adorable princess, tears being her sole resource amidst all these sufferings. The prince was almost as ill treated by the officers appointed to serve him, who were all chosen by the queen and entirely devoted to her: but he was far from being as patient as his sister, as you will soon learn.

The King of Lombardy had a cousin-german after the fashion of Brittany, who was Archduke of Piacenza. This

prince had gone mad from sleeping one night in a castle in the middle of a forest, in which he had lost his way while hunting. The castle was haunted by spirits, and he was said to have seen some so extraordinary, that fright had scared his wits, and all the physicians in the world had failed to effect his cure.

He had a son and daughter whom he loved passionately, and not without reason, for two more perfect creatures never existed. The prince was called Pertharites, and the princess Ferandina ; they were both inconsolable at the condition to which they beheld the best of fathers reduced. They sent to consult a famous enchantress, who was held to be one of the sybils ; she lived near the lake of Averno, and she was called the Mother of Sheaths, because the cavern which she inhabited was lined with sheaths ; and every one who came to consult her was obliged to bring her a knife, which she thrust into one of these sheaths before she gave her answer. All that she said in reply to those who had come to consult her on the malady of the prince was, that his children had nothing to do but seek their father's wits in the same place where he had lost them. The ministers and the whole council opposed this measure, and said it was quite enough that their prince should be mad without the rest of the family running the risk of following his example ; but all they could say was of no avail. Pertharites was obstinate in his resolution of going thither alone, as the representative of both ; but to this his sister would not consent, and after many vain efforts to detain them, the handsome Pertharites and the charming Ferandina set out for the haunted castle. The whole court accompanied them to the spot, but they entered the castle alone ; and though a fortnight elapsed in expectation of their return, they never made their appearance. The despair which followed this deplorable event was universal throughout the dominions of Placenza. At first it was suggested that the Mother of Sheaths should be burned alive. The attempt would have proved a vain one, for in those days witches did not allow themselves to be roasted as they do now. The president of the council, a prudent and well-advised man, recommended instead of this that all the most distinguished persons of the country should each visit her, and presenting her with a knife set in precious stones, implore her assistance.

The magnificence of the presents seemed to throw her into a favourable mood ; the knives were all thrust into their respective sheaths—for there would still have been empty ones to receive them, though all the knives in the universe had been brought her.

"Friend ram," said the giant, "what was the good of all these knives and sheaths to the people of Lombardy you were mentioning just now ?"

"If your giantship will have a moment's patience," replied the ram, "you shall be enlightened."

The sorceress, after putting away her presents, opened an old cupboard, out of which she drew a comb and a collar ; the comb was in a case, and the collar, made of polished steel, was fastened by a little golden padlock. "Here," said she, "carry these two things to every court in the world, until you have found a lady beautiful enough to open this collar, and a man sufficiently perfect to take this comb from its case. When you have found these, you will have nothing to do but return home. This is all I can do to assist your masters."

The officers of the crown had travelled through every part of Italy, without finding in any of the courts or provinces of that kingdom the persons whom they sought, when at last they sent to announce their arrival and the subject of their visit to the King of Lombardy, who held his court at Mirandola, the capital of his dominions. He was already informed of the misfortunes of the Duke of Placenza, and of the loss of Pertharites and Ferandina. He made no doubt but his wife was beautiful enough to unfasten the collar, and that among the youth who flourished at his court, one would be found of sufficient merit to take the comb out of its case ; but he could not see, for the life of him, how that should help the calamities of his relation. He ordered every preparation to be made for the reception of the ambassadors who were to arrive in a few days. The queen thought of nothing but bathing, dressing her hair, and using cosmetics ; for women, whose sole concern is their personal appearance, think they never can do too much to heighten it. The confidence she had in her own charms did not prevent her feeling considerable anxiety as to the effect which those of the princess might produce, although every means had been used to spoil them. The governess, the

zealous minister of all the evil designs of the queen, ran all over the town to find some honest physician who would undertake to give her the small-pox. Not finding what she sought, she was tempted to poke out one of her eyes, and to swear it was done by accident.

The prince, her brother, having resolved to go forth to meet the ambassadors at some distance from the city, summoned all the young noblemen of the court to his apartments that they might accompany him. He was adored by them, but they scarce dared pay their court to him lest the queen, whose power was in proportion to her charms and the weakness of the king, should be offended. The prince, whose mind was sufficiently formed to be capable of acting with policy, disimulated his resentment out of respect for his father, to whom he was fondly attached.

As he was about to mount on horseback, a young nobleman drew near him, and with tears in his eyes begged him not to mount the horse which had been brought him, as it was the most vicious and ungovernable of horses, and had already killed three or four persons who had been forced to mount it, and that his father, one of the queen's first equerries, had chosen it on purpose that some accident should befall him.

The prince whispered him in his ear to take no heed, and proudly vaulted into the saddle, when his kind admouitor had nigh lost his life from a dreadful kick the animal gave ere the prince was well settled in his seat. He was the best horseman and the most accomplished proficient in all manly exercises that could be seen, except the handsome Pertharites ; and it was well for him that it was so, for the moment the cursed animal snuffed the air of the open country he became furious, neighing, prancing, shying and kicking without cease, until the prince, whose spurs had covered the horse with blood, was himself covered with perspiration from his efforts to control him. In this he thought he had succeeded, for he was returning into the city very quietly, surrounded by the ambassadors, when the queen's equerry goaded him from behind just as they were halfway on the bridge. The horse reared at first, and feeling himself constrained, made a side leap, clearing the parapet, fell into the stream, and was drowned ; but the prince swam to the bank, and without exhibiting the slightest

resentment withdrew into his apartment in order to change his garments.

The king and queen, attended by the whole court, were awaiting the arrival of the ambassadors upon a scaffolding erected in one of the public squares, in order to proceed to the trial which had been announced. The prince, quite recovered from the effects of his accident, made his appearance as radiant as the sun; and was received with acclamations from the multitude.

The ambassadors arrived directly after the prince. As soon as they approached, the queen, without listening to the compliments with which they addressed her, said to the prince that it was an ill-timed jest to take a bath at such a time, and asked him jeeringly whether he had found the water pleasant. At this taunt, all the she-apes attending on her opened their ugly mouths, and testified their approbation by bursts of loud laughter.

The queen was continuing in the same tone, when the princess presented herself. As soon as she made her appearance the people broke into a murmur, and began to shed tears, the courtiers shuddered with the indignation which they dared not express, and the ambassadors, struck with astonishment, were at a loss what to think when they beheld the princess, whom they had often heard compared with the admirable Ferandina. She was ill-clad, and her hair was worse dressed; for one side of her head had been completely shorn, and to render her still more ridiculous, her face had been smeared with yellow paint. In this plight she stopped every moment, and could not forbear shedding tears of shame; but her governess pushed her on roughly from behind, and forced her to place herself by the side of the queen, who was shining in all the brilliancy of her beauty, and sparkling with precious stones. One would have thought the triumph which the queen thus enjoyed would have been sufficient, but to render it more complete, the ladies of the palace burst into loud yells when the hapless princess was obliged to place herself beside her.

The king who kept his eyes fixed to the ground was ready to die with shame and compassion, and having neither strength of mind to express his indignation, nor the courage to remain, turning to the ambassadors observed, that there was no

likelihood that he, the ugliest of men, was destined to carry off a prize which belonged to the handsomest, and commanding the prince, his son, to fill his place, withdrew.

The prince without losing time ordered the trial to begin at once. At his direction, the comb was first presented to the queen's equerry, and when he failed to draw it from its case, the prince ordered him to be put to the torture, whereupon he confessed the design he had had of causing the death of the prince. Horror-struck at this crime, the people got possession of him and stoned him to death, in spite of the queen's presence and the prince's desire to save his life for the sake of his son.

The collar was next presented to the governess of the princess, who threw herself on her knees and begged in vain for mercy; there was no great chance that she would open it, for she was even more ugly than she was wicked. The prince not deigning to listen to the entreaties of his step-mother, who humbled herself before him to obtain her pardon, ordered her to be burnt alive at the other end of the city, that the assembly might not be inconvenienced by the smell. This ready-handed justice was received with shouts of approbation by the whole town as well as by the court, with the exception of the queen's ladies, who made most piteous and woe-begone faces on the occasion.

The prince having imposed silence ordered the trial to proceed, adding, that none need fear being punished if they should fail, for he had only begun with these two wretches, that he might have an opportunity of making them confess their crimes, and inflicting the punishment they so richly deserved.

The ambassadors thought this address of the young prince full of wisdom and prudence, and the queen, who had never heard any one speak in such a tone in her presence before, was lost in astonishment. The prince commanded the ladies of the bedchamber to attire his sister and deck her out as became her age and rank, and to be sure they discharged their duties with care, or their lives should pay for it. He was obeyed, and the princess returned so lovely and so dazzling that it was impossible to observe that she had lost one side of her hair. All the men tried in vain to withdraw the comb from its case; and it was quite a pastime to hear how the people yelled and

shouted every time the collar was presented to one of the queen's ladies. At last it was handed to the queen herself, and after several efforts she succeeded in opening it, but it immediately closed again, making such a terrible noise that she fell back and was carried away to all appearance lifeless.

There only remained now the prince and his charming sister to make the trial ; and the ambassadors full of sadness had already made up their minds they should have to go back with their comb and collar and begin their journey once more. But no sooner did the prince take the case into his hand than the comb came out of its own accord, and in the same manner the collar opened at the princess's touch without closing again. A thousand shouts rose into the air at once, and would have continued some time but for an earthquake which shook the entire city, and was followed by a whirlwind, accompanied with hail and lightning, which dispersed the whole assembly. When it was all over, the prince and princess were nowhere to be found ; they had disappeared at the same moment that the result of the trial was decided. The news of this event spread universal grief throughout the kingdom. The king was inconsolable, and the courtiers, after putting on the deepest mourning, dispersed in every direction to seek them all the world over. But that which will cause your giantship the greatest surprise is, that the despair of the queen surpassed the affliction of everybody else. The hatred which she had felt towards the prince and princess was suddenly changed into affection, and that of so violent a nature, that she literally tore her hair when she heard they were lost. She sent for the king in order to beg him to forgive her, for instead of the contempt and aversion which she had always felt for him, he was now the object of her heart's adoration, and her fancy pictured him to her as the most amiable of men, and the most worthy to be loved. But the king not doubting but she had caused his children to be made away with by some treacherous practice, although he was weak enough to love her still, far from punishing her, resolved to punish himself for his weakness, and made a vow that he would never see her again.

While all this was going on at the court, let us see a little what had become of the prince and princess.

" Well thought of ! " cried the Giant, " for thou wert beginning to play the jack-a-lantern with my wits by all these mazes and shiftings. A pretty pother to make about the loss of a couple of young scapegraces, for I doubt not this prince was just such another malapert as that jack-a-napes the Prince of Noisy. Would I might have a fair blow at him ; 'twould be rare sport to rip him up and tear his heart out ! But the vile creature has taken himself off far enough after his insult and treachery, and the devil only knows what's become of him. Nevertheless, I am consoled that thou dost promise I shall yet see him."

" Aye, and so you shall," said the Ram, who continued his story in the following manner :

The storm which had dispersed everybody on the day of the trial of the comb and collar, had separated into two distinct whirlwinds, which had borne away the prince and his sister, and deposited them a great distance apart, and both a long way from home ; for 'tis mighty fast travelling by this kind of conveyance. The princess found herself in the midst of a vast forest, and directly she recovered her senses, her forlorn condition, and all the dangers to which she was exposed in this frightful wilderness, presented themselves vividly to her imagination. In vain did she cast her eyes in every direction ; there was nothing to be seen but trees and rocks, and the echoes alone answered her voice when she called to her brother for help. She was wandering in this way at random along tangled and intricate paths, when two wolves, who were prowling about, perceived her and rushed towards her with extended jaws. Already she thought herself no better than wolves' meat, and uttering a loud shriek she covered her face with both her hands that she might not see the terrible fate that awaited her, at the same time unconsciously holding up the collar. As soon as the wolves caught sight of this object, they scampered off as though a hundred dogs were at their heels. The like befel certain bears who made sure of her a few steps further on, and another herd of wolves, who fled more rapidly than the first when they saw the collar. By this time she had reached a broad road which ran across the forest.

In the middle of this road a dozen or more shepherds were

keeping their flocks. Her fears were beginning to dissipate when she saw herself in a less terrible place, and she hastened towards the shepherds with redoubled pace to implore their assistance ; but just as she was on the point of opening her lips, the sheep, seeing the collar, began to scamper away through the forest, and the shepherds after them. It was not till then that she became aware of the virtue which the collar possessed, and she regretted that she had not known it previous to the routing of the sheep ; nevertheless, she felt extremely comforted at the knowledge. She struck once more into the thickest of the wood, in order to try and come up with one of the shepherds ; but it was in vain that she ran and called after them ; they still continued running before her. Wearied with this chase, and the distance she had already travelled in the midst of rocks and brambles, she leisurely followed a path which was less broad and open than the first, and at the end of which she perceived an old castle. At this prospect she seemed to gather new strength, though she had been almost ready to drop from fatigue. She was within a short distance of the castle, when a fox whiter than snow crossed the road immediately before her and then returned on his steps to place himself in her path, and halting at about seven or eight steps before her, fell to gazing on her with extreme attention, nor was she less curious in her examination of him, for it was impossible to see him without being charmed with his appearance.

"Oh ! " cried the Giant, "here we have him at last, this plaguy white fox ! Marry ! 'tis a god-send ; for I accounted him lost, so long hast thou been a plaguing my wits with other matter, nothing at all to the point, I dare venture. Well ! and what did they, when they had done gazing at each other ? "

The princess, continued the Ram, quickly concealed the collar, lest it should scare away the fox ; of all things she would not have lost him out of her sight, for together with the sly and knowing look peculiar to the physiognomy of foxes, there was a singular grace, a certain indefinable air of nobility in the expression of his eyes. She approached him to see if he would allow himself to be taken by her, or at least if he would follow her to the castle ; but he would do neither the one nor the other, and began to run off in quite an opposite

direction. Nevertheless, he did not run so fast but she could keep him in sight, and after spending the rest of the day following him with a constancy far above her strength, the poor princess was at last on the point of falling down from weariness, when she discovered a kind of diminutive palace standing on the bank of a small stream in the most delightful situation in the world. The fox had already entered; fear and uncertainty at first held back the princess, but the desire of following her amiable fox carried it against all other considerations. Accordingly she entered the palace, and the white fox, who was politeness itself personified, having received her at the door, took the skirt of her gown between his teeth, and in spite of all she could do to prevent him, insisted on supporting it while she crossed the court-yard on her way to the principal apartment of the palace.

The first thing she did was to throw herself on a couch, for nothing was wanting there in the way of fitting up; and as she gazed on her dear fox lying at her feet and eyeing her with affection, she not only forgot all the dangers and fatigue she had gone through, but she would have given up everything else in the world never to stir from where she was. We will, if you please, leave her there, and return to the prince, her brother.

"In that case," said the Lord of Moulineau, "I would venture a round sum we shall never again clap eyes on her nor her white fox; for thou dost nought but play at shuttlecock with my attention. Couldst thou not contrive to make an end of what concerns them ere thou scamperest off after another adventure?"

"That may not be," said the Ram, "but nothing is easier than to finish the story here, if you are already weary of it." The Giant, who was not in a humour to sleep yet awhile, declined the proposal, and the Ram proceeded as follows :

Your excellency will be kind enough to remember, that while one of the whirlwinds carried off the Princess of Lombardy, and set her in the midst of a forest, the other had dealt in like manner with the prince, and left him on the sea shore. Here he began to pace about with long strides, his mind filled with the novelty of this adventure, and the recollection of what had taken place on the same day at the court of the king, his

father. As all whom he could think of, there, were only deserving of hatred or oblivion, the only person his mind dwelt upon was his sister, abandoned by the weakness of his father to all the cruelty of a step-mother, more embittered towards her by the triumph she had just carried off. These gloomy reflections led his imagination far enough, while, at the same time, his steps conducted him to the base of a rock rising gradually from the shore and advancing into the sea. Without thinking what he was doing he ascended to the top of it, and being at a considerable height, the prospect before him stretched far away on every side ; behind him appeared a wild and uncultivated country ; but in the direction of the sea he descried, in the distance, an island which appeared to him the most delightful retreat in the universe, and he was never weary of gazing on it. It occurred at first to his mind that the princess, his sister, might very well chance to be on it. The next moment he treated the thought as a mere fanciful vision ; but, nevertheless, it still continued to return to him. The summit of the rock was covered with moss and thick-tufted grass. He stretched himself on the grass, and rested his head upon a bank of moss, and placing one hand beneath it, turned with wishful glances towards the island, and fell into a profound reverie. In short, except that his face was not bathed in tears, he was in pretty much the same posture as that in which the love-sick Prince of Noisy was accustomed daily to gaze on the Druid's castle from the time of his first meeting with his daughter.

The Giant, who was beginning to fall asleep, waking up at this point in the story, "What!" he cried, "does the cursed puppet, after his insolence in offending me, dare to be in love with Alie ! Only let me catch him again, friend Ram, and I'll flay him alive, stuff his skin with straw, and send it to his mistress."

" You will be doing well," replied the Ram, " for I warn you that she has no dislike for him. But let us quit the subject, which we will resume another time, and return to the Prince of Lombardy."

As I observed, he was gazing attentively at this island, which seemed to be carpeted with the most charming verdure, and adorned with thousands of trees bearing the most beautiful

blossoms. Never did he take his eyes from it until the shades of night began to envelop and conceal it from his sight. Quitting the shore, he advanced further inland, but without meeting a single habitation ; and halting in a wood where he met with but sorry cheer, he spent the night there as best he might. As soon as the day dawned, his first intention was to seek some road which would lead him back to his father's court, making no doubt but his sister would be in need of his presence ; but he could not banish the thought that she was in the island. The idea appeared to him as ridiculous as when it had first occurred to him ; nevertheless, he returned to the sea-shore, where he wandered for some time, but when he was about to climb the rock again, that he might gain a better view of the agreeable island, he could nowhere discover the path by which he had ascended it the previous day. He was walking round the base of the rock, trying to discover another, when on the opposite side he heard the most beautiful voice he had ever listened to in his life. He decided it at first to be the voice of a woman, and made his way through a thousand difficulties and obstacles, that he might reach the place where he still heard the voice singing, for the rock stretched out into the sea. At last, after going almost entirely around it, he came to more even ground, and it seemed to him that he was now within eight or ten steps of the singer ; still he could see no one, and he fancied the person must be hidden behind another angle of the rock. He was advancing with eagerness in that direction, making as little noise as he could, when he saw near the place he was endeavouring to reach, the skin of a large fish stretched out upon the sand. This object inspired him with horror, and turning away to avoid the disagreeable spectacle, he made a noise, and at the same moment heard something leap into the sea. He immediately turned round, but the skin was no longer there. He then advanced towards the place where the voice had sounded, but found no one there ; his surprise, however, increased tenfold, when he discovered the most beautiful bath in the world ; it was constructed in a grotto at the foot of the rock, which was not the work of nature alone, for it was covered all over with marble, and the bath itself was of ebony, lined with gold. He was at a loss what to make of all this, though

he was thinking of it the whole night, which he spent as he did the two or three succeeding ones, in the midst of a wood, with heaven for his canopy, and wild fruits for his food. This was no very delightful existence for a prince, but it was the least of his cares. Every day he returned to the sea-shore, but neither heard nor saw anything. The path which had in the first instance conducted him to the summit of the rock, at last presented itself again ; he ascended it with eagerness, and gazed once more with delight at the beautiful island. Scarcely had he reached the top when he heard the same voice which had so charmed him before. He immediately descended, and just as he was within three steps of the grotto he beheld once more the blood-stained skin ; his fright at it was even greater than at first, and caused him to make the same noise, but quickly turning round, he saw a huge fish leap into the sea, and observed that the skin was gone. He found the grotto in the same state as before, except that the bath was filled with water. On putting his hand in he found it warm, and made up his mind that some one had just been bathing, but he was puzzled to understand how it could be the fish who should come there and have skinned himself to take a bath and sing so melodiously. He returned to the place whence the fish had leapt into the sea, and observed that the surface of the water was still indented with a long furrow extending in the direction of the island. The next morning he placed himself in ambush behind some rocks at the entrance of the grotto, that he might find out what kind of fish this could be. He fixed his eyes on the island, imagining that the animal would come from thence, when he saw something white emerge from it, which he took at first for a little sailing-boat. As it advanced towards the shore, his curiosity increased and the object diminished, so that he was obliged to leave his ambush not to lose sight of it. When this floating object was near enough to the shore, instead of steering straight for the entrance of the grotto, it turned aside as if to land higher up. The prince advanced to the very edge of the sea, and saw that instead of landing, this wonderful thing only kept close to the coast, advancing at the same time in his direction.

As soon as it was near enough for the prince to make out what it was, he beheld the most beautiful creature in the

universe, seated in a marine shell, holding in one hand the end of a large white sail, fastened by the other end to this wonderful car, and guiding it at her will with the assistance of the Zephyrs. The prince fell upon his knees, persuaded that it was the goddess Tethys taking a ride upon the waters, for nothing could more resemble the portraits which are made of her and her equipage, except that this Tethys was neither so fair nor so naked as the goddess is usually represented.

The breeze was lull'd, and in her face
He saw the self-same beauty shine,
Ordain'd in after times to grace
A Princess born of Conti's line.
In that fair form each charm endearing
Of Conti's Princess was display'd;
Her gracious mien and noble bearing,
In pride of ancestry array'd;
And all the alluring graces spread
In groups about each lovely feature;
A shape unmatched by living creature;
But of what else the nymph display'd
A painting best will give a notion,
Of Venus rising from the ocean.

The Prince of Lombardy still continued kneeling before this divinity, and had he had a thousand eyes would have gazed at her with them all. She had stopt immediately before him; why she did so is uncertain, unless it was that the admiration of the Prince and his outward appearance were not displeasing to her. On his side, he felt that it was all over with his liberty, for admiration and love had seized upon him at one and the same time, and that with such violence, that he was quite lost, and large drops of perspiration fell from him. He drew out his handkerchief to wipe his face, and in so doing pulled out the comb and its case which fell to the ground. No sooner did the beauty see it than she gave a loud cry, and approached as though she would have landed; but the prince, overwhelmed with shame that an object so little sorting with the dignity of a hero should have dropt from his pocket, snatched it up and put it away with an air of indignation at the shame which it had caused him. At this the fair one uttered a louder and more piercing cry than the first, and abruptly turning her back upon him, sailed off in the direction

of the island, and was soon out of sight. He was sensibly affected by this event ; all his desires were now centred in the island, and as there was not a boat to be seen that might convey him thither, he resolved to try the experiment of Leander ; and he would have been but too happy to meet with the same end provided the beginning were equally agreeable. Accordingly he was beginning to undress himself when he heard, proceeding from the top of the rock, a whining and moaning sound such as dogs make when they are distressed. Raising his eyes he beheld the white fox erect on his haunches making the same noise and gesticulating with his fore-paws in the direction of the island. The prince was examining him attentively, when a little boat, which had been unmooored from the island at the cries and signals of the white fox, advanced full sail towards the shore. The fox came down, and no sooner saw the prince than, after capering several times with joy, he began to lick his hands and feet ; but the prince, who, at the very first sight of him, had conceived as much affection and esteem for him as though he had known him all his life, would not allow him to continue.

While these civilities were proceeding on either side, the boat was already alongside. The white fox motioned to the prince to resume what clothes he had taken off and get into the boat with him. This was what the prince ardently desired ; but ere he betook himself to the place where he hoped again to behold his divinity, he remembered the shame to which he had been put by his comb, and drawing it from his pocket, was about to throw it into the sea, when the white fox, with a cry of agony, sprang upon his coat-sleeve and held his arm with all his strength, nor would he loose his hold until the prince had returned the comb, together with the case, into his pocket. As soon as they were in the boat, it began to sail off of its own accord ; but they had scarcely advanced twenty paces when the clattering of horses' hoofs was heard proceeding from the shore which they had just left. A man on horseback, apparently pursued by several others, advanced to the edge of the sea, bent his bow and let fly an arrow which pierced the white fox through and through. He gave a deep sigh, and turning his eyes mournfully towards the prince, closed them as though never to open them again. The prince was scarcely less

afflicted than though he had received the arrow himself, and consulting only his grief and his resentment, he leapt into the sea to go and avenge the death of the poor fox. He soon reached the land; but not a soul was visible, and he lost all hope of vengeance, together with the traces of the murderer, whose flight was masked by the rocks lining the whole of that coast. He returned to the sea-side with a view to try and get back to the boat and see whether the fox were not yet within reach of succour, but it was in vain. There was as little to be seen on the sea as on the land. The hopes of the prince and all the flattering pictures he had formed of his approaching happiness vanished at once, and he was left on the desolate shore with no other company than that of his grief and his despair.

At this point of the Ram's story, the Giant Moulineau began to yawn, and feeling a greater inclination for his bed than for the rest of this history, he undrest himself, called for his boots, and retired for the night.

Next day at early morn, the Ram failed not to attend his master's levée, and after paying his court to him by praising his good looks and the charms of his person, informed him, that during the night he had taken a survey of the enemy's quarters, and having closely examined the place under shelter of darkness, he had come to the conclusion that it was impregnable by force and still more by famine, seeing that the Druid who possessed power over the elements would find means of subsistence in spite of all they could do to prevent him; that it was evident he laughed at all they had hitherto done, and that it was his advice that they should surprise his daughter by some stratagem.

"And by what stratagem?" said the Giant.

"As thus :" replied the Ram. "Your giantship shall intimate that you repent of all that your resentment has led you into doing; that you have too much love for his daughter, and too much respect for him to persist in endeavouring to win him over by force of arms, and that as you are now determined only to owe the peace which you desire to your love and to your services, you are about to withdraw your troops, and leave him in the enjoyment of full liberty, upon condition that as a set-off to the expenses of the war and as

a reward for my services, the lovely Alie shall, with her own fair hands, gild my two horns and my four hoofs with the same gold which her father keeps under the statue of Cleopatra."

"And what good will your being gilt be to me?" said the Giant.

"Does not your giantship's profound sagacity perceive," replied the Ram, "that as soon as I am furnished with a passport, I shall seek out the Druid, and as the power of his enchantments is dependent upon his life, I shall take the first opportunity of driving my horns into his body, and when I have killed him, nothing will be easier than to throw open the castle gates to you and make you master of his daughter and of all his treasures."

The generous-hearted Moulineau made no attempt to combat so black and infamous a project; he merely desired to make some trifling alteration in it that the Ram might not have all the honour to himself. Accordingly he proposed that in order the more effectually to deceive the Druid, they should dispatch a herald instead of a trumpeter. The Ram appeared in an ecstasy of admiration at this stroke of policy and presence of mind. The plan being settled in accordance with the last piece of advice, while the herald was preparing, and the dispatches he was to carry were being drawn out, the Giant requested his favourite to resume the story of the white fox, which he did as follows:

The prince, when he was left alone on the sea shore in the manner I have told you, had never felt his mind a prey to such various agitations, nor his heart oppressed with so many tender emotions. He could not force himself from a place where he had witnessed so many extraordinary events. The fox, the nymph, and the fish alternately occupied his thoughts, nor could he come to any conclusion as to who or what they could be. All he knew was, that it was impossible to feel more love than he did for the nymph, more horror for the fish, or more regard for the memory of the unfortunate fox. The approach of night, and a few flashes of lightning threatening a forthcoming storm, interrupted his reveries, and obliged him to seek some place of shelter.

He knew of none more commodious than the grotto of the

baths. It appeared illuminated with a number of lights, and on drawing near to it, he heard the same voice which he had already twice heard before. He crept as gently as he could to the entrance of the grotto, and there suddenly halted lest he should interrupt the accents of the loveliest voice he had ever heard in his life. He was so close to the person singing, and so attentive to the words of her song, that he lost not a single syllable. They were these :

Prince, who with love my heart dost fire,
Ah ! wouldest thou save me from despair,
Pray condescend to comb my hair ;
And in the bath when you admire
My form, than which is nought more fair,
Wouldest thou my thanks eternal win,
Be kind enough to burn my skin.

Words so flattering to his hopes, and yet so obscure and so mysterious, increased his curiosity to such a degree, that he suddenly entered the grotto, fully determined, however, should he find the fair singer, only to execute one half of her behests, and merely to comb her hair with the most delicate precautions, but not to burn her skin, which he thought must be the most beautiful in the world, since she had intimated as much. Moreover, he felt a presentiment that this singer was no other than his divinity of the day before.

As soon as he was inside the grotto, the singing ceased ; it was lighted up by an infinity of tapers placed in ebony sconces mounted with gold, in a similar manner to the bath, and each taper was in the shape of a knife half drawn from its sheath. He was surprised at this mode of illumination ; but his astonishment was greater still when he saw the bath covered over with a white satin tent, embroidered with golden sheaths. He was examining all he saw before him with attention and wonder, when he heard a sigh proceeding from beneath the tent, and the next minute the same beautiful voice, but in a speaking tone, addressed these few words to him :

"Prince ; I am she whom you love, and by whom you are loved ; do all that I shall tell you, however difficult it may appear, and do not be alarmed in the course of an adventure,

in which you will lose me for ever, if, when this tent is drawn open, you betray the slightest fear." "I fear?" cried he. At the same moment the tent was thrown open, and at the sight that presented itself he had nigh fainted; the head of a crocodile, with its jaws wide open, was stuck out of the bath, and seemed to be advancing in his direction. He kept his ground, but large drops of perspiration stood upon his brow, and his heart beat with violence. Nevertheless, he fixed his eyes stedfastly on this frightful head, which, after closing its jaws, bent itself backward, and showed beneath it the loveliest countenance that was ever seen, and which he immediately recognised as that of the nymph whom he adored. The head, however, which was sticking up over that of the nymph, made but an ugly head dress, and fitted her cheeks and forehead so tightly, that there was not a hair to be seen. All this mattered little, for all the horror the prince had felt was dissipated at once directly her beautiful eyes were bent upon him, and he was kneeling before her, in order the more respectfully to address her, when the nymph exclaimed,

"What are you about, prince? The moments are precious; why do you not comb me?"

"Comb her!" said he to himself. "How the deuce is that to be done?" The nymph appeared irritated at his delay. Accordingly he drew forth his comb, and thought to have taken it at once out of its sheath, when he found, to his surprise, that it would only come out little by little, and that not without considerable exertion. But as it left the sheath by degrees, the crocodile's head continued to bend itself backwards, and discovered the most beautiful hair in the universe. When the comb was half out, the head disappeared, and the prince beheld the nymph in all her charms. The transport of joy which he felt communicated fresh ardour to his efforts in pulling the comb out of its case, at the same time that he imagined she must indeed want a combing after carrying that ugly head. He observed that as the comb came out of its case the remainder of the nymph's person emerged from the water. Lilies, snow, alabaster, would have seemed yellow compared with that which now presented itself to his gaze; but this dazzling whiteness was as nothing in comparison with all the graces which adorned each beauty. Her shoulders and

half her arms were now out of the water, and it was quite a sight to see the prince's efforts upon his comb in order to obtain the rest. But the nymph, addressing him : "Enough," said she ; "leave now your comb in its case, and prepare to burn my skin."

"I burn your skin!" he cried ; "may mine, my whole body, and all the universe along with it, be reduced to a heap of cinders, ere that divine skin sustain so much as a scratch from him who adores you."

"I doubt not your love," replied the nymph ; "but this is not a time for any overstrained delicacy ; all you have to do is to obey me. If you are anticipated you lose me for ever ; for you must know I can only belong to him who shall have burnt my skin."

The prince could not persuade himself to execute the request, and while compassion, love, and obedience were disputing for ascendancy over his heart, the nymph bade him farewell, the tent closed upon her and all the lights were extinguished.

It was not till then that the prince repented that he had not burnt the least little corner of her beautiful skin, which certainly would have hurt her a little, but from which he would have reaped so much benefit. He was determined to repair his fault at the first opportunity, and least he should be anticipated he encamped at the entrance of the grotto, there to await the dawn of day. He had not been there long when he beheld another blaze of light ; at first he imagined it was the grotto illuminated once more ; but afterwards discovered it was a fire which had been lit beneath the trees forming the extremity of the forest stretching towards the sea. He was running to take a firebrand from it, when at the first step he took he beheld the skin of the fish. Seized with the same horror at the sight, and indignant at again meeting the frightful object, he took it up in a transport of rage, exclaiming, "As for thee, detestable skin, so unlike that of the nymph I adore, thou shalt be burnt," and running with all his might to the place where he saw the fire, he beheld a woman seated, who no sooner perceived him carrying this appalling object, than she uttered a loud scream, and ran wildly into the thickest part of the forest.

The prince threw the skin into the fire, and no sooner was

it there than he thought he had sprung a mine charged with a hundred thousand pounds of gunpowder, so terrific was the explosion that ensued. After this exploit, he snatched up a brand and returned with all diligence to his former post. This firebrand proved useless, for on his return he found all the tapers alight again, and the bath full of water, but neither the seat nor the nymph were anywhere to be seen. He was nigh driven desperate at it, persuaded that some less tender and less serupulous lover, after giving her a good combing and her skin a thorough scorching, had carried her off as a reward for his pains.

He ran out like a madman to pursue them, not knowing which way he should go, and traversed the forest in every direction without meeting with a single object. Day was beginning to dawn when he found himself at the place where the fire had been kindled. Feeling a desire to see if anything remained of the frightful skin which had made such a noise, he found nothing but a heap of cinders. But what was his surprise when he found the collar within two steps of the spot ? This sight rejoiced him, for he doubted not but the person who had run away into the wood was the princess, his sister. He ran with all speed in the direction she had taken, without troubling himself about the collar, and he met her hurriedly returning on her steps. My story would grow out of all length were I to tell you with what joy they beheld each other again, all the caresses they exchanged, and the tender speeches with which they expressed their mutual affection. They never wearied of relating all the trouble and anxiety they had undergone respecting each other's fate, and seated themselves beneath a tree to recount all that had befallen them. The prince having come to the end of his adventure with the nymph, and the grotto of the bath, fortunately omitted saying anything about the white fox, and it was well he did so, for the princess having related her misfortunes up to the moment when we left her, proceeded thus :

" O my dear brother ! had you but seen how charming was this fox, it would have been impossible for you not to love him. His care and attention to me were something quite supernatural ; he seemed to guess my very thoughts, so exactly did he anticipate all my wishes. It is true I had no other than

that of never being separated from him, and I was so afraid of losing him that my first care was to conceal my collar which caused the flight of every animal that beheld it. The little palace in which we were, was adorned with gardens, grottoes, and fountains, whither the fox would conduct me when he thought I desired to take a walk, and during these walks, although he could not speak to me, he understood all that I said to him, and found means to express that he was transported with joy at the kindness with which I treated him. By his looks, however, and his beseeching gestures he seemed to beg something of me, and I was in despair that I could not understand what he desired, for I would have given him my life had he wished it. At last, to my misfortune, a light broke upon me. I had hidden the collar in the midst of a bush at the extremity of the garden. The white fox, in the course of one of our walks, caught sight of it, and far from being frightened away by it, as all the other animals had been, he left me in order to leap upon it, but no sooner had he touched it than the collar closed again with the same noise as it had done in the hands of the queen. The poor fox, the moment he heard the noise, leapt backwards, and with another bound cleared the garden-wall, and I have never seen him since. I took up the accursed collar again, which I now detested, and would never again have touched had I not remembered that it would be necessary to me in the forest in order to protect me from the other animals I might meet there. I had no sooner taken it into my hand than it opened again, and from that fatal day, although I have never ceased wandering through woods, and rocks, and precipices, amidst a thousand dangers and difficulties, my greatest affliction has been that I could no where find my faithful and beloved fox. Night overtook me yesterday in the spot where I had kindled a fire, and where you came and frightened me with that horrid skin, and so soon as I had recovered from my astonishment at the explosion I heard as I was making my escape, I retraced my steps in order to fetch the collar, which I had forgotten in my flight.

When she had finished this account of herself, the princess entreated her brother to conduct her to the place mentioned, but in vain did they search for it, it was no longer to be found. She was not so afflicted at this as she might have

been had she not encountered her brother, whose presence inspired her with courage to brave the perils from which the virtues of the collar had hitherto preserved her, and relying on the kindness of the prince and his friendship for her. "Dearest brother," she said, as she pressed his hand and wept, "to you I will confess the excess of my infatuation; I can no longer live without the white fox, and if you are not kind enough to accompany me all over the world in search of him you will see me die of grief."

The tears came into the eyes of the Prince of Lombardy as he reflected to what despair his sister would be reduced on learning the sad fate of the poor fox, and, unwilling to inflict pain on her, he withheld what he knew, and promised her everything she desired, on condition that she should allow him the whole of that day to wander over the sea shore. The princess gave her consent with reluctance, so eager was she to set out in search of the white fox. The grotto of the bath was the place appointed for their meeting after they had visited all the environs. On entering the grotto, the princess was astonished at all the wonders she beheld, although she had already been informed of them by her brother, and while she was engaged examining them, the prince clambered up to the top of the rock, and stretched his gaze to the furthest point it could reach, over land and sea, but neither land nor sea presented a vestige of what he sought. The place seemed formed expressly to invite reverie and contemplation; and as the spot brought to mind the crocodile's head, and with it the beautiful nymph, he could not resist talking to himself, notwithstanding his great objection to this mode of proceeding in books.

"What can have become," said he, "of that adorable being whom I have seen under so many various shapes? and what has become of those sentiments so favourable to myself which she made no attempt to conceal? What! because I refuse to burn her, she disappears directly my back is turned! Some reckless lover has, doubtless, done it," he continued, "and all those lovely charms have become the reward of his barbarity. Where is the monster who could have burnt a skin so—? Stay!" he exclaimed, suddenly; "may she not have meant that disgusting skin which I burnt yesterday?" This

thought seemed to awaken him as from a dream, and convinced him of his former error. "Yes," he continued, "it was of that detestable skin that she wished to rid herself. Only a block-head such as I could have ever mistaken her."

"By my faith," said the giant, "I should have done no better; why did not the stupid toad tell him it was her other skin? But proceed with thy tale, friend, for I tell thee frankly I begin to find it somewhat tedious."

The prince, said the Ram, entirely persuaded by these recent reflections, that he had, without knowing it, executed a part of the nymph's commands, was at a loss to understand why she had not given him an opportunity of performing the rest. "For instance," said he, taking his comb and drawing it from its case with all the ease in the world, "if this queen of my heart were here, I would comb her better than ever she was combed in her life." Just as he had said this, he fancied he heard cries proceeding from the neighbouring wood, and turning round in that direction, beheld a woman running with all her might through the trees to avoid the pursuit of a man mounted on horseback. Notwithstanding the distance at which he was, he could make out that the man held a bow in his hand, and making up his mind that it was the murderer of the white fox, and that she whom he pursued was in need of prompt assistance, he ran off into the wood. He was guided by the cries of the woman, for on coming down from the rock he had lost sight of her; the desire of rescuing her, and of avenging the fox, seemed to lend wings to his flight; but even though he had run with less speed, he must soon have encountered them. The paths of the wood were so entangled that they had caused the woman to stumble and fall, and the man having alighted from his horse, held her in his arms, and was about to place her on his horse when the prince arrived.

The beauty of the woman at first dazzled his eyes; but what was his astonishment when he recognised her to be the queen, his step-mother. He was not aware of the happy change that had come over her, and the remembrance of her cruelty and hatred towards his sister had well nigh caused him to repent that he had reached them in such good time. Nevertheless, being of a generous disposition, he disengaged her from the arms of the ravisher, and, taking sword in hand, was about

to avenge her wrongs and the death of his friend the white fox, when the queen held him back, telling him that it was the Archduke of Placenza. When he had examined him a short time, he no longer doubted the fact, for he was the wildest-looking archduke in the world. His beard was long and thick, his hair all entangled, his eyes rolling savagely, and his clothes in tatters. The queen fell upon her knees, embraced those of the prince, and entreating his pardon for all the injustice of her past conduct, conjured him to come with her to the assistance of the king, his father, whom this accursed archduke had wounded with an arrow which he had let fly at him. The prince, transported with rage at this afflicting intelligence, turned round, and would have slain him in spite of his madness, but he had taken to horse again during the queen's discourse, and was probably gone in quest of fresh adventures.

While the queen and the prince were hastening with all speed towards the place where she had left the King of Lombardy, she related to the prince how her heart had suddenly changed towards the whole of the royal family; how the king, her husband, having refused ever to see her again, had set out from the court in search of his children, and, driven to despair by the departure of her husband, she had followed him, taking with her neither equipage nor suite; but not being able to find any one of the three, she had consulted the Mother of Sheaths, who had taken her to the Isle of Sheaths, where she had seen the loveliest princess in the world, and the most unfortunate, for she was forced from day to day, by the power of magic, to take the shape of a sea monster; and when the time came, a large skin appeared before her, against which she struggled in vain; how the terror it caused her was equal to a thousand deaths; but that, nevertheless, she was constrained to wrap herself up in it and jump into the sea.

The prince, transported with delight and admiration, could not refrain from embracing the queen at this point of her story, and assuring her that she of whom she spoke would no longer be importuned by the frightful skin; and in his turn kneeling before the queen, he besought her to conduct him to the isle in which this adorable princess was to be found. "It was in order to lead you thither that I have been seeking you,"

she replied ; " but though I have been fortunate enough to meet with you, we have as yet done nothing, unless we can find the princess, your sister ; for on her presence, no less than your own, depends the safety of the most precious life in the world ! "

" Of what life would you speak ? " said the prince, alarmed.

" Of that of the white fox," replied the queen, " whom, perhaps, we may not find alive."

At the bare idea of the white fox being dead, the beautiful queen could not forbear melting into tears. " Alas ! " she continued, " the poor fox would come and see us from time to time, and charmed us by his graceful manners. As for me I was quite mad about him. Yesterday he made signs for the skiff to be sent over for him from the island. I was standing on the shore waiting his landing ; the spell-bound beauty was with me, but she was unable to wait until his arrival, for having strayed away a short distance, as though to indulge her musings, she gave a loud scream, and suddenly leapt into the sea in the most hideous shape imaginable. I pitied her from the bottom of my heart, but soon another subject of affliction presented itself when the skiff reached the shore, and I beheld the white fox bathed in blood, and at the last gasp. At this spectacle, I uttered a thousand cries of grief, and taking him up in my arms, carried him gently to the Palace of Sheaths, where he is attended on as though he were in the palace of the king, your father. The surgeons pronounced his wound mortal ; but the governess of the island, who is much interested for him, knelt down before the Oracle of the Sheaths. I listened, and heard that if I could bring the Prince and Princess of Lombardy within twenty-four hours to the island, the white fox would be saved ; and that I had but to enter the skiff, and it would conduct me to these shores where I should hear of them. I landed yesterday at night-fall, and wandered over the forest to find you, but what was my astonishment to find the king there. I was transported with joy. At first he would have fled from me ; but seeing his intention I threw myself at his feet, and said so much to assure him of my repentance and reformation, that he yielded to the affection which he has always borne me. Nevertheless, he told me he could not stay where I was until he had found his children.

I then informed him that I was myself in search of you both, and that an oracle had told me I should find you. He believed me. After which I told him all that I have just related to you. He informed me, on his part, that the archduke, his relative, having escaped, within the last two or three days, from those appointed to watch him, was running about the country with a bow and arrow, killing all he encountered. This morning, as we were commencing our search for you, the archduke, who had unfortunately followed us, pierced the king through the shoulder with an arrow, and was about to slay me with another, which he had already adjusted to his bow ; but after examining me for some time, he seemed inclined to treat me in quite a different manner, and advanced to seize and place me on his horse. My flight at this action gave me so much strength and lightness that he had soon lost sight of me. As he had alighted from his horse, the time lost in mounting again had given me a considerable start of him ; nevertheless, but for your timely succour, I should have fallen into his clutches."

This narrative concluded exactly as they reached the spot where the king had been wounded, but he was no longer there, and they were seized with fresh apprehensions. Compassion on the one hand, and duty on the other, dictated that they should lay aside every other consideration, and seek him in all directions ; but love, overpowering every other consideration, commanded an opposite course. Wishing all prosperity to the king, wherever he might be, they forthwith directed their steps towards the grotto of the bath, there to take up the princess, and immediately after set sail for the Isle of Sheaths. On entering the grotto, they found the princess seated and giving way to despair. She held her father's head upon her knees, and was bathing it in her tears ; she thought him dead ; but he was only in a swoon. His eagerness to pursue the man who had just wounded him, and was then about to carry off his wife, together with the loss of blood, had so weakened him, that all he could do was to drag himself as far as the grotto in search of assistance ; his weakness, joined to his surprise, had thrown him into a swoon.

Your giantship will now be kind enough to picture to yourself the sorrows, the cries, and the lamentations of the king's son

and of his wife when they beheld him in this condition ; and so save me from troubling you with them. They brought him to his senses by the process usually adopted in romances towards fainting heroes and dumb-founded divinities—namely, by plentiful sluicings of cold water. They staunched his wounds with bandages of gauze, and lifting him up by the head and legs, carried him to the skiff, which was considerate enough to place itself alongside the landing-place nearest to the grotto. As soon as they were all on board, the princess learnt from the lips of her step-mother the melancholy adventure of her beloved fox. On hearing of this misfortune, her despair broke out in a thousand different fashions ; she insisted on throwing herself into the water, or at any rate on fainting away with emotion ; but neither one nor the other were allowed her, and they succeeded at last in tranquillising her mind by telling her that as soon as she presented herself before the white fox, he would immediately become as sound as a roach. There is nothing more delightful to a love-stricken heart than to be able to restore life to the object of its affection. Although the boat cut the waters like a dart, it seemed to her to stand stock still. At last her impatience was put an end to ; they reached the shore, landed, and betook themselves to the palace. There, if it please you, we will leave them, and turn our attention to the archduke.

"The devil take thee and thy archduke!" said the giant. "By heaven thou shalt not stir from the island until all this be cleared up."

"As you will," replied the Ram, and forthwith proceeded as follows :

The white fox lay stretched out on a little bed beside a blazing fire, fast approaching his end ; his eyes were closed and his whole body motionless ; but at the first cry of the princess he opened his eyes, and as soon as he beheld her, summoning together what little strength he had left, he gazed at her as tenderly as any fox could do who is at the last gasp, and feebly wagged his tail. She threw herself prostrate before him, but the governess of the island, who had not sent for her to indulge in lamentations, took her by the shoulder and making her stand up,

"What are you about," said she ; "you are here to cure the fox and not to lament over him."

The King of Lombardy, notwithstanding his feeble condition, was taken with the same doating affection as every one else at the sight of the amiable animal, and while the governess was speaking, never left off weeping and feeling the patient's pulse. The governess ordered him to be led into another apartment, and while he was in the hands of the surgeons, addressing herself again to the princess—

“Why do you delay,” said she, “to succour your beloved fox? His life is in your hands; when you have put the collar, which is in your possession, about his neck, he will be better than ever he was in his life; but I warn you, you have not more than a few minutes to spare.”

Nothing could add to the princess’s despair, when she heard that the life of her beloved fox depended on the collar which she had lost. As soon as this was known, a general burst of lamentation was the result, and all the bystanders exclaimed, “The collar is lost!” At the same time a thousand voices, proceeding from a thousand Sheaths with which the chamber was ornamented, joined the concert, and exclaimed, in a variety of tones, “The collar is lost!”

The King of Lombardy, whose wounds the surgeons were then probing, inquired what all this horrid din was about. He who had bound up the fox’s wounds was just returning from the apartment and informed the king.

“A precious rout,” said he, “to make about a collar.” “Here,” he suddenly added, “here is one I found this morning in the forest, which I hope and trust is the one in question, for then it will put an end to this intolerable noise which I cannot endure.”

One may judge of the pain the king suffered from the effects of the probe by the fretful manner with which he sent the collar to the assistance of the fox, who had so won his affection. When the surgeon made his appearance with the collar, the poor patient was already with the death-rattle in his throat, and the princess, who was in a mind to kill herself, was fuming to see so many sheaths around her and not a single knife. She snatched the collar as though she was mad, and immediately placed it round the neck of her beloved fox. This was no sooner done than he began to stretch, and stretch, and stretch, to such a length, that he was no longer a fox, but, forsooth, the most

charming man in the world. This change in no way diminished the princess's affection, for she was no loser by it ; but though she was ravished with joy, she felt a little embarrassed what countenance to make in the presence of one who, but a moment since, was her darling fox, favoured without scruple or constraint with her innocent caresses. Confused, and casting down her eyes, she quitted the room, while a suitable dress was being brought to the charming Pertharites, for, doubtless, your giantship has been long aware who the fox was.

As soon as the charming Pertharites was dressed, he hastened to seek his lovely princess. With what transport did they converse with each other, and with what delight, more especially, did the affectionate princess learn who he was, and that she was adored by him. After receiving the compliments of those who had taken an interest in his misfortune, he proceeded to pay his duty to the King of Lombardy.

The prince, who had not remained in the palace, having immediately quitted it when he found that his lovely nymph was not there, was ignorant of all that had taken place. He was returning thither dejected and sorrowful, after wandering in vain over the whole island, just as Pertharites was coming out in search of him. They met, embraced, and told each other in a few words all that had befallen them. Pertharites, turning to the governess of the island, who was present at the moment of his meeting with the Prince of Lombardy, besought her to take compassion on the prince's troubles, and the sufferings of Ferandina.

"Alas!" replied the prince, "suspend awhile the compassion you feel for Ferandina. It is the lovely spell-bound nymph whom you must seek and deliver from the frightful sufferings which she endures."

"They are even greater than you imagine," rejoined the governess; "nevertheless, their relief depends entirely on yourself, that is if you still possess your comb."

Immediately he drew it from his pocket, and the governess having recognised it, exclaimed :

"Well! now you must comb the nymph, whose repose you are so desirous of ensuring. Will you swear to do so?"

"Will I swear?" replied he; "Yes, I swear it. Lead me at once to the unfortunate nymph!"

"Softly," said the governess; "what if, after restoring her to all the brilliancy of her former charms, she should wish to make you marry the charming Ferandina, the sister of Pertharites; would you consent?"

"No!" cried the impassioned prince. "I would rather die."

"But if you cannot purchase her repose at any other price," rejoined the governess, "what would you do?"

"Let us hasten," he replied, "and release her from her sufferings; let her owe her tranquillity to me, and I will pay for it, even with my life, without regret."

"Come, then," said the governess, "come and comb her if you dare!"

So saying, she conducted him, followed by every one, to an apartment, the door of which flew open directly she approached. But what was his surprise when he beheld, in the midst of this apartment, the hapless nymph, seated in an arm-chair, and apparently wrapt in flames! Her throat and arms were half uncovered, and it was by the beauty of these alone that he recognised her, for her head was enveloped in flames, flowing about her like hair; her face was swollen up, and her eyes were starting from her head.

"Behold!" said the governess to the prince; "this is the plight to which you have reduced the nymph whom you adore, by ridding her of her crocodile's head and of her skin; go now and comb her."

He required not to be told twice, though the enterprise was no very easy one. He drew forth his comb, and rushed into the apartment. Scarcely had he touched the flames with the hand, in which he held the comb, when they were immediately extinguished, and the nymph, more fresh and blooming than Aurora, and more dazzling than the god of day, held out her hand to him; he knelt down to kiss it. At the same moment the charming Pertharites, entering the apartment, which, by this time, was cooled down to an ordinary temperature, threw his arms about the neck of the nymph, who, on her side, embraced him affectionately. The outburst of jealousy to which the prince was about to give way, was suddenly checked by the gentle names of brother and sister greeting his ear, and apprising him, to his incorreeivable joy, that

his divine nymph was no other than the charming Ferandina, whose hand he had refused, and whom he now flattered himself he would soon call his own. He could not persuade himself that all his happiness was real ; nor was there any end to his astonishment as he reflected that this celestial beauty, whom he had adored in so many different shapes, was the renowned Ferandina, and that the charming Pertharites, in the shape of a white fox, had so passionately loved his sister.

These four lovers, the most perfect and the happiest in the whole universe, betook themselves to the apartment of the King of Lombardy. The queen was by his side, and by her eagerness and attention was giving him every mark of sincere affection : his wound being a trifling one, he was soon cured. To afford him some diversion, the charming Pertharites related to him the history of his metamorphosis, and of that of Ferandina.

The day we entered the castle, said he, in search of the archduke my father's lost wits, we were bewildered by the appearance of an infinite number of spectres and frightful phantoms. After being tormented by them the whole night, at dawn of day, a woman of respectable appearance, although very old, and covered all over with sheaths, appeared before us, bearing in one hand a collar, and in the other a comb.

"Here, Pertharites," said she, "put on this collar ; and you, Ferandina," added she, addressing my sister, "comb yourself with this comb, if you would have your father recover his reason ; and to console you for the misfortunes which may befall you both, learn that when this collar is placed on you, all your misfortunes will be at an end, and you will have your heart's desire ; and you, fair Ferandina, the same thing will happen to you when your skin shall be burnt, and you are combed with this same comb which I now give you." So saying, the Mother of Sheaths disappeared.

Meanwhile, in order to make my way out of the castle and cure the archduke, my father, I lost no time in putting on the collar. No sooner had I done so than I felt myself transformed in the manner you have seen. My sister, on beholding my misfortune, uttered a loud scream. As reason had not deserted me in the midst of this fatal change, I felt it in all its horror.

Notwithstanding my grief, my first thought was to preserve Ferandina from the snare which the Mother of Sheaths had laid for us. Being deprived of my voice, I made signs to her not to comb herself, raising my paws to my head.

Deceived by this action, she imagined that I was entreating her to comb herself, and in the hope that the comb might perhaps prove the antidote of the collar, she was about to comb herself; but scarcely had she touched her hair than I beheld them wrapt in flames exactly as we have just seen them. She immediately ran to the castle-gate, throwing away her comb as I had my collar, darted into the forest, and never left off running till she had reached the shore facing this island. I followed her everywhere, and saw that when she was at the grotto of the bath she was about to undress herself and plunge into the bath which was full of water; but, unfortunately, having cast her eyes on the horrid skin, in spite of all her cries and all her efforts to avoid it, she felt herself constrained by an invincible power to wrap herself up in it and throw herself into the sea. Every day I came to the spot to weep over her destiny and endeavour to see her again. One day I had clambered upon the rock where I made all manner of cries and lamentations in the direction of the castle on the island, believing that Ferandina had taken refuge there, when I saw a skiff come away from thence; I embarked in it, and it landed me on the island. I beheld my sister on one of her favourable days; she related to me how the governess had received her, and treated her in the most humane manner in the world; but she brought tears into my eyes when she told me that on those days when the skin presented itself before her, she was obliged to submit to her fate, to jump into the sea, and proceed to the grotto, where the skin left her while she refreshed herself in the magnificent bath. The governess, who seemed interested in our distresses, allowed me to come from time to time to see Ferandina. We agreed upon the signals which I was to make from the top of the rock. I returned into the forest to seek the remedy for our evils—namely, the comb and the collar. Fortune, or rather the spells of the Mother of Sheaths, conducted me to the little palace which I have since always inhabited.

The fair Princess of Lombardy has told you in what

manner I had the good fortune of meeting her ; how I felt myself forced to quit her when the collar closed itself, and she has informed you of all that has happened to us up to this moment.

This narrative threw every one into an extraordinary state of astonishment. As soon as it was ended, the governess of the island, taking up the thread, said, "It is now my turn to tell you who this Mother of Sheaths is, for what reason she has wrought this cruel vengeance on the archduke and his charming family, and finally the meaning of these sheaths, and—"

"No ! no !" cried the giant, "not a word of them will I hear : I have had a fair bellyful of sheaths, and can stomach no more."

"I have nothing more to tell you, then," said the Ram, "for you know how all these stories end."

"How do I know how this will end ?" rejoined the giant. "Finish it, finish it, and that quickly."

The King of Lombardy, continued the Ram, was cured of his extreme ugliness, at the same time as of his wound. The archduke made it up with the Mother of Sheaths, as soon as he recovered his reason. She gave the enchanted island, the grotto of the baths, and the whole surrounding country to the charming Pertharites, who established his residence there with the Princess of Lombardy, whom he married ; while all the charms of the incomparable Ferandina fell to the lot of the Prince of Lombardy.

The Ram having, fortunately for the reader, no less than for the giant, terminated his story, their next thought was, to dispatch the herald to the parley with the Druid and his daughter.

SECOND PART.

WHILE the Ram was diverting his master the giant, the Druid was engaged in composing the mind of his daughter, and appeasing the agitation of her heart. He had no other child but this ; and even though he had had fifty, the whole fifty

together could not have made up one-half the sum of Alie's charms and of her merits.

The sincere confession of little Puncheon left him no doubt but that his daughter had abandoned all her rigour in favour of the Prince of Noisy. He loved Alie as all wealthy and speculative fathers usually love an only daughter, and he had been for a full hour at least wasting his time in endeavouring to prove to her, by the most subtle arguments and the most overwhelming demonstrations, that she was bound to detest the Prince of Noisy instead of loving him. It was all to no purpose, and her heart would have fought it out with her head for ten years, sooner than have yielded the point. The Druid, who soon perceived this, found it necessary to set to work in a different manner ; and assuming a more serious air,

"Alie," said he, "at first I was desirous of helping you to cure yourself by gentle means, in order to spare your heart the blow which it is about to receive. But you force me at last to inform you that he whom you love is no more."

"And I," said she, "must inform you that you are mistaken, for it is scarcely two days since the Prince of Noisy spoke to me in this very garden."

"Alie," replied the Druid, "beware how you place any dependence upon visions, which your immoderate grief leads you to take for realities. Listen to what I am about to tell you, and you will see that I have no intention of deceiving you.

"I have already told you in what manner the race of Pepin acquired possession of a throne which my grandfather, your great ancestor, looked upon as his ; and how, after various fruitless attempts to recover his rights, he found in the study of philosophy a consolation for the injustice of fortune ; but the progress which he made in these studies was not to be compared to the insight into the most recondite secrets of Nature acquired by my father. Nor have I proved a degenerate son ; unceasing application and indefatigable labour have given me power over the spirits inhabiting the four elements ; and the intelligence they afford me, joined to my own acquirements, afford me a knowledge of the future, and leave me ignorant of no portion of the past. Nevertheless, as there is no mortal power so great that it can dispense with all extraneous assistance in exerting itself, I find my power curtailed to such

a degree by the loss of the book which I forbade you to read, that I am reduced to the unfortunate extremity of yielding to my enemies, and of being uselessly informed of their designs against me without having it in my power to counteract them or to avoid the misfortunes which threaten us. The greatest of my enemies is the magician Merlin, and the mortal foe of this magician is an immortal woman, vulgarly called the Mother of Sheaths. She formerly dwelt in the neighbourhood of the Apennine mountains; I will tell you some other time all that she did in order to lure thither her enemy Merlin, who is in truth far less learned than she, but much more subtle and wily. It was by his superior cunning that he was enabled to render himself master of the most precious of her treasures, —a knife, whose marvellous virtues made it the chief instrument of all her enchantments; in short, this knife was to her what my book was to me. Her desire to recover it constrained her, in spite of the gentleness of her nature, to inflict great sufferings upon innocent persons, in order to arrive at the real culprit. She established in all directions a kind of branch-offices crammed full of sheaths, and she insisted that all those who came to implore her assistance should make her an offering of knives, in the hope that the one she had lost would at last find its way into one of her sheaths. Some years since, the enchantress, leaving Italy, which she had exhausted of knives, established herself in France, in order to be nearer to Merlin, whom she suspected of the theft, and who, for some time past, has been reigning in triumph at the court of Pepin. She has selected Moulins as the place of her abode, and thither all the knives are making their way from all quarters by the gross; and, if my art deceive me not, that place will in future ages furnish cutlery to all Europe. Merlin, however, was not left long in the enjoyment of his booty; the renowned Dagobert, my father, found means to gain possession of it, and this marvellous knife which he bequeathed me I still possess. Merlin knows it, and from the time he ascertained the fact, there is no kind of enchantment, stratagem, and artifice that he has not employed to deprive me of this precious object. My power, which was much greater than his while I retained possession of my book, has hitherto secured me from all his attempts, and the place which we inhabit has remained inac-

cessible to all his assaults, but I tremble lest my book should have fallen into his hands, and made him the arbiter of our destinies.

"I begin to suspect that this relentless Ram, whose hatred is so flagrantly declared against us, is no other than Merlin himself, who is seeking to gain admittance into this abode by every kind of device. The great Dagobert, my father, who foresaw your birth and the dangers with which you would be threatened, caused a green bower to be prepared in which you were to be placed as soon as you came into the world ; it is this tower which has preserved you from a thousand misfortunes, and will still protect you so long as it shall not fall into the power of any man. For this reason was it placed in the depths of a spring called the Fountain of the Bower, and which none may approach with impunity, for though he who shall become master of it be destined to possess you also, whoever shall dare to attempt the enterprise, and fail, will make it his tomb. The imprudent Prince of Noisy, whose destiny it was to bring misfortune upon yours, was likely enough to have made the attempt at the risk of his life, but he has perished in a different way. Yes, my child," continued the Druid, "this phantom, which had so disordered your senses, you must efface from your mind ; and if, as you say, you have recently heard his voice, be assured that it was an illusion produced by Merlin, and designed as a snare."

This was quite enough to interrupt the attention with which the fair Alie had listened to the discourse of her father. She turned deadly pale, wept, tore her hair, and after going through all the usual manoeuvres of a scene of real despair, she fainted away in the arms of her father. On recovering from her swoon, she inquired in what manner her darling lover had ended his days, that she might end her own in the same way. In vain did the Druid observe that there was no occasion to die for one who had been the only obstacle to her happiness ; that it was his project to restore to the Mother of Sheaths the knife which her enemy had stolen from her, and afterwards to join forces with her against him ; that after this alliance a career of glory and felicity was in store for her. Nothing of all this was of any avail, and the Druid was obliged to yield to the singular curiosity of his daughter. He conducted her to

the base of the statue of Cleopatra, caused the statue to open, gave egress to the amiable Puncheon, and permitted him to become visible. But though nothing could so well deserve to attract the attention of Alie as this charming little person, she did not even bestow a glance upon him. He was disconsolate at this mark of contempt, for he loved the nymph with all his heart, and his sole thought was how he might serve her.

The Druid entrusted Puncheon with the talisman which he wore upon his finger, and enjoined him to bring back with all diligence that which he should find in the midst of the liquid gold and precious stones he had so long guarded, without being allowed to see them. Puncheon was not absent more than a moment and brought back a knife of moderate size. It was quite dazzling from the lustre of its blade; had two edges, and appeared very sharp at the point. The Druid took it from the hand of Puncheon with some show of respect, and placing it in those of his daughter,

"There," said he, "is the oracle which will inform you of the fate of him whom you regret; I wish to convince you by the evidence of your own senses that there is no trickery in this ordeal. Press the point of this knife gently against the smoothest part of the pedestal of this statue—the characters which it will trace will guide your hand and satisfy your curiosity."

As soon as the point of the knife was in contact with the stone, it began to write with rapidity, and then suddenly stopt. Alie then read what it had written; she read it two or three times over that she might make the more sure of her misfortune, and also to strengthen her resolve never to survive it. Oracles are wont to deliver themselves in verse. The effusion of the knife was as follows :

The Seine, just where its waters lave
The soil whereon stands ancient Poissy,
Beheld the death, but not the grave,
Of the ill-fated Prince of Noisy.
You who his cruel fate deplore,
Although you'd better far forget it,
To learn you now have nothing more
Than that 'twas through the Ram he met it.

The first impulse of the fair Alie was to pierce herself with the selfsame knife from which she had just learnt the death of him whom she adored ; but her father arrested her hand and snatched the knife from her grasp. After many vain efforts to tranquillise her mind, he persuaded her at last to drag on her miserable existence until she had caught the accursed Ram, Merlin, and caused him to perish amidst the most exquisite and prolonged tortures. For you must be aware with what horror and detestation we look upon the murderer of one we love, and that the extent of the sufferings inflicted constitutes all the sweetness of our revenge. But the question was how to get hold of the culprit. The Druid told his daughter that it required the most imperceptible artifices in order to ensnare him. The difficulties which Alie saw besetting the execution of her design, redoubled her impatience and her despair. She was embracing the knees of her father, and conjuring him, as he loved her, to employ all the secrets he possessed in order to hasten the hour of her vengeance, when their attention was arrested by a flourish of trumpets from without the gates of the castle. Little Puncheon was dispatched to see who it was, and returned the next moment, announcing the arrival of a herald from the giant. It was decided that he should be allowed an audience. He was introduced into the state-room of the palace, where the Druid received him ; while his daughter, attended by Puncheon, set about melting the hearts of all the groves, fountains, and statues in the garden, by her piteous lamentations. But all were insensible to her grief ; the tender-hearted little Puncheon alone kept her company, and mingled his tears with those which his mistress shed over the memory of the Prince of Noisy. This gloomy occupation was at last interrupted by the return of the Druid.

Joy, astonishment, and anxiety were depicted at one and the same time in the features of the Druid ; although it is no easy matter to depict them altogether in the same face.

" My daughter," he exclaimed, " fortune is doing more for you than I could have expected from all my skill. The enemy has rendered useless all the snares that I might have laid for him and gives himself up of his own accord into my hands. But the proposals of the giant exhibit but too clearly the hand of Merlin ; he only could have had any knowledge of the

treasure we keep watch over : it is no longer possible to doubt that it was he who caused the death of the Prince of Noisy, in order to gain possession of the book, of which the hapless man was unable to avail himself in his defence. This advantage is enough not only to protect him from the vengeance we meditate against him, but might put him in a position to overwhelm us in ruin, were he not blinded by the grandeur of his projects. His purpose in coming here under the pretext of having his horns and his hoofs gilt is simply to make himself master of a treasure on which our destinies are dependent, and which, since the loss of my book, is now my sole resource. He thinks himself so safely concealed in his disguise of a Ram, that he flatters himself he will take us by surprise in the midst of a blind confidence. He is to present himself here to-morrow for the ceremony with which you are to honour him ; for I immediately consented to all his proposals, and to-morrow you shall be informed what kind of a reception I intend to honour him with.

This intelligence suspended the grief of Alie, which was succeeded by the flattering hope of a speedy vengeance, and though at the very name of the Ram she was convulsed with horror, she had no dearer wish on earth than to behold him. As soon as the day dawned she sought her father, who, after taking every precaution which he deemed necessary against the designs of the enchanter, conducted his daughter to the statue of Cleopatra. Despair and grief had greatly worn down her looks, nor had she a single ornament about her to heighten the effect of her charms ; nevertheless, to give you an idea of her beauty,

Nor Lombardy's enchanting queen,
Nor she who loved the fox so white,
Who once of Italy had been
The chief adornment and delight,
Had ever charms so passing bright
As those of beauteous Alic seen ;
And spite of her dejected plight,
Her matchless graces far outshine
E'en Ferandina's looks divine.—
Not when to hateful spells a slave,
A filthy fish's skin conceal'd her;
But when a floating car so brave
In all her dazzling charms reveal'd her,
Like Venus rising from the wave.

All this is mere futility;
But I who of all tastes possess
The foolish taste of constancy,
Before this beauty I confess,
In homage should have bow'd my knee,
Persuaded that I knelt to thee.

The fair one accordingly, accompanied by her father, repaired to the pedestal of the statue, where everything was prepared for the scene which was designed to take place. A vase inlaid with large diamonds was filled with a fluid more precious still, for it was the liquid gold with which it had been promised that the Ram's hoofs and horns should be gilt. The Druid then gave his last instructions to his daughter, not, however, until he had placed his ring upon her left hand, and in her right the redoubtable knife of the sorceress.

"Alie," said he, after he had thus armed her, "I now leave you, for I am no longer proof against the power of enchantments while I am dispossessed of the talisman which I leave in your hands. You need fear nothing from Merlin, whatever efforts he may make to harm you; remember only what I am about to tell you. As soon as the ram makes his appearance, conceal the knife, and only show him the vase which you will present to him. No sooner will he have seen it than he will approach it without the slightest suspicion, but as he knows that he cannot become possessed of it until he has touched it pretend that you are about to begin by gilding his feet before you do anything to his horns, and make him lie down at your feet that you may the more conveniently work at them. When he is down take your knife and quickly cut off as much wool as you can from his head. If he abandons his disguise of a Ram and appears as Merlin, which he will not fail to do if it be really he, kill the enchanter at once ere he has time to escape, and if he remain in the shape of a Ram kill him likewise, and avenge the wrongs he has done you. When this execution is over, come and find me in the palace with all the diligence you can. Puncheon, whom I shall render invisible, will remain with you."

The Druid, after giving these instructions, embraced his daughter, and withdrew into the state apartment. Scarcely was he there, when a flourish of trumpets was heard, and

a few moments after, the Ram, having exhibited his passport, appeared in the middle of the garden. All the blood in Alie's veins was in commotion at the sight of the murderer of her lover, and so violent was her impatience to have him in her power, that it needed all the Ram's confidence in the success of his project to prevent the discovery of her intentions.

As soon as he was near Alie, he bowed his head down by way of salutation. Imagining that he was presenting his horns to be gilt, she lost all command over herself, and lending him a sound kick in the middle of his forehead, "Lie down there, wretch!" she exclaimed, "if thou wouldest have me touch thee at all." The Ram, who was probably not prepared for this reception, obeyed without the slightest hesitation, and laid himself down at full length at her feet. Forgetting then the instructions of the Druid, she was for at once making sure of her game, and having driven her knife into him exactly in the region of his heart, it was not till then that she cut off the tuft of wool with which she should have begun her operations. After this exploit she ran to her father, to apprise him of the death of the Ram, and to present him with the glorious trophy of which she had shorn him; but what was her alarm when she saw the Druid start with horror and surprise.

"Wretched girl!" he exclaimed, "whose blood have you been shedding?—for it is neither that of the Ram, nor of Merlin. Behold the spoils which you have brought me!"

Casting her eyes then on the hand in which, as she imagined, she held the woolly tuft of the Ram, she found it full of the most beautiful fair hair that was ever seen. As she gazed upon it, a feeling of horror crept over her, and dropping at the same time the hair and the knife, she darted wildly away, to clear up her mind as to the nature of the fatal act she had just been committing. It was in vain that her father called and ran after her, nor would she ever have stopt but for the strange concert which greeted her ears. The statues in the garden, animated by some enchantment, seemed to mingle their voices in a doleful chorus, singing:—

Yes, 'tis she, the Druid's daughter,
Guilty of her lover's slaughter.

All the birds from the most distant groves assembled round

the statues, to answer the burthen of their chorus, and the surrounding echoes repeated, one after the other :—

Yes, 'tis she, the Druid's daughter,
Guilty of her lover's slaughter.

The misfortune was, it so happened that the statues, the birds, and the echoes, who all repeated the same thing, were saying nothing but what was perfectly true.

The hapless Alie, disengaging herself from the arms of her father, who had overtaken her as she was listening with breathless attention to the words that fell on her ear, ran off in wild despair to the statue of Cleopatra. What a spectacle was there for one whose heart was filled with the most lively and sincere affection that being ever felt ! The charming Prince of Noisy, more charming even than when she beheld him at the fountain, lay weltering in the blood that was bubbling from the frightful gash she had just inflicted on him. She threw herself upon him, and for the first and last time in her life embraced him. Her lover feebly opened his eyes, turned them with a languishing expression towards her, and then closed them again for ever.

I know not, mademoiselle, what your feelings may be upon reading this passage ; but this I know, that the learned Mabillon could never refrain from weeping while translating these memoirs. The scene was, indeed, most touching ; for the fair Alie, leaning against the pedestal of the statue, held in her arms the bleeding corpse of the most charming of men, and the most faithful of lovers, while she poured over his face, and over the wound she had just inflicted on him, a torrent of tears. The Druid, little Puncheon, the sylphs, and all the birds of the vicinity were present, and all wept together at this deplorable spectacle.

The illustrious and learned translator of these memoirs would have done wisely to have stopt here ; for when the hero of the piece has had his throat cut under the semblance of a ram, and has been recognised again in propria persona, what follows cannot deserve much attention. But in order to satisfy your curiosity as to the origin of the name of Pontalie, we must proceed to the end of the story.

Although the Druid was overwhelmed with grief and surprise at so many unforeseen incidents, he was not a man to remain in the state in which we left him. His first care was to return to the palace where he had left the last resource that remained to him, in order to run after his daughter. He commanded the sylphs to remove the body of the Prince of Noisy, and to carry it to the fountain of the bower, where he would presently join them. He then conducted Alie to the grove of the Vestals, and desired little Puncheon not to leave her, lest in her despair she should do herself some violence.

The Druid's orders were but ill executed, for the timid sylphs, afraid at finding themselves alone with a pale and disfigured corpse, sought out Puncheon, who was keeping Alie company, and entreated him to carry the body of the Prince of Noisy to the fountain, while they should remain with his charge. Any one would have thought that this change in the directions of the Druid could not be of the slightest consequence ; nevertheless it had nigh spoilt all, as will be seen in the sequel.

The Druid's haste was not without a motive ; his object was to recover the enchanted knife which his daughter had let fall in the state apartment. He had now nothing to fear except the loss of this treasure, nor anything to hope but through the assistance which he expected from it. It so chanced that Alie had let it fall upon its point, and whenever the point of the knife rested against any solid substance it began to write. Accordingly he found the floor of the apartment covered with an infinity of characters. The knife, which was wet with the blood of the unfortunate Prince of Noisy, had left distinct traces of the writing upon the marble, and still continued making fresh marks. The Druid seized hold of it and arrested it ; but although there was not a language in the universe he was not acquainted with, he could not, for the life of him, make out this which the knife had just been writing. It consisted entirely of these words, repeated over and over again : CASIA, TUXIL, GRIMORION, GRINA, NAXUN, CRADEL.

He read them over a thousand times, looked at them in a thousand ways, replaced the point of the knife at least twenty times against the marble, but still it went on writing

its confounded CASIA, TUXIL, &c. &c., which it commenced afresh every time. He imagined that perhaps the blood with which the blade was soiled had something to do with the diabolical language which completely baffled all his science. In order to clear up his doubts, he went and washed it at the nearest fountain ; but the water only made the blood of a brighter colour, and seemed to incorporate it with the dazzling blade. He then repaired to the statue of Cleopatra in order to return it into its former place ; but no sooner had he put it into the liquid gold than it recovered all its brightness, and the blood disappeared. The Druid thought that now it would express itself more clearly, but when he placed the point against the same spot on the statue where it had written before, it still described the same characters as before. The Druid was so mortified that he was tempted to shatter it against the statue, or to stab himself with it, and so punish himself for his ignorance.

Being a philosopher, however, he finally adopted a more rational course. After shutting it up again within the statue, he set about comparing these extraordinary words which occasioned him so much anxiety, with all the Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, and Chinese he could find. This occupation lasted to an advanced hour of the night, and entirely drove out of his mind all thoughts of our hapless lovers. We shall not do amiss if we leave him here, and repair to his unfortunate daughter.

The grove of Vestals, where the sylphs were watching over her, exhibited in every direction whatever could have relation to the virgins of antiquity. Some were represented in statues worshipping the sacred fire of which they were the guardians ; others seeking refuge in a glorious suicide from the violence of wicked emperors ; and others, in fine, having yielded to less brilliant temptations, were about to undergo the severe punishment they had incurred.

No sooner had the Druid left his daughter in the grove of Vestals, than the tender and despairing fair one fell into a swoon.. On returning to her senses, her grief broke out afresh ; the most heartrending cries and fits of the wildest despair, which no pen can describe, now ensued ; she besought heaven and earth, and the sylphs attending on her, to restore to her

the object of her adoration, whose days she had cut off with her own hand.

But to what a plight was she reduced on beholding her hands and her garments stained with the murder of the unhappy Ram ! At this spectacle her despair reached its last extreme, and delirium rescued her from its horrors, as it had done a few days before. She suddenly began to stretch her eyes wide open, and fancying herself a vestal, the victim of a false accusation, and about to be burnt alive, she asked for her tablets that she might write the dying sentiments of her heart, and give them to the sylphs to be delivered to her dear lover.

The sylphs were frightened at the wandering condition of her mind, and started back a few steps. Whereupon Alie exclaimed :—

“ Degenerate virgins ! you are not worthy the precious charge which you refuse. But I see him myself,” she added, hurriedly rising from the ground, “ I see the dearly beloved shade who is approaching, to receive my last farewell ! ”

This was quite enough to procure her full and entire liberty ; a fact which would lead me to believe that the nymphs who guarded Alie were not true sylphs, but mere village maidens in disguise, for they took to their heels directly their mistress had said she saw the shade of her lover ; while the fair Alie, her thoughts still bent on the same idea, darted off like a mad woman, fancying herself in pursuit of the Prince of Noisy, and calling upon him aloud.

She had reached the door of the garden ; and notwithstanding the door was shut, fancied her lover had made his escape through it. This obstacle would have at once put an end to her chase ; for not all the art, nor all the strength in the world, could open a door which was kept shut by enchantment, had it not been for the ring which Alie wore on her finger, and which her father had given her as a protection against the wiles of Merlin. She accidentally struck the garden door with her hand, and no sooner had the talisman touched it, than it flew open, and the charming Alie was left to range at will.

She crossed the bridge, which, but a short time before, had caused her so much alarm, but without knowing that it was the handiwork of the poor Ram. Had she known it, I know not

what would have become of her, for she could not fail to have stopt upon it, in order to indulge in some passionate exclamation ; and if she had accidentally touched it with her ring, farewell bridge and nymph too, for every enchantment was destroyed the moment the ring touched it. When fortune owes us a grudge, however, we only avoid one danger to fall into a greater.

The giant Moulineau had not failed to betake himself to the garden-door, that he might be introduced into the place as soon as the Druid was dead, according to the scheme he and his prime minister had concerted together ; and while the mournful scene we have just related was enacting within, he never ceased hovering without. He was at a loss to account for so long a delay ere the revolution was accomplished that was to put him in possession of his mistress and the treasures of the Druid, and which was to be brought about at the expense only of a few butts of the Ram's horns. Sometimes he would fancy that the Ram had betrayed him ; and sometimes that he had been betrayed himself. But, at last, night had surprised him in the midst of his impatience and his reflections, and he had just crossed the bridge in order to regain his quarters, when the unfortunate Alie, perceiving him through the darkness, took him at first for the beloved shade she was pursuing, and doubling her pace, " Dear prince ! " she exclaimed, " stay and receive the last sighs of thy cruel, thy innocent murderer ! "

The enamoured Moulineau recognised the voice that now greeted his ears, and albeit it was the same which had called him dwarf, he turned round and beheld a face whose lustre dispelled the shades of night. What were his thoughts when he beheld the fair Alie precipitate herself into his arms ! He imagined that the faithful Ram had murdered the Druid, and that his daughter, henceforward mistress of her own actions, was now taking the earliest opportunity of abandoning herself to the inclination she had always felt for him.

The author of these memoirs was much to blame for breaking off the adventure at this critical juncture, in order to return into the Druid's castle. The hour was dangerous, fancy will lead us far afield, and giants are not without their fascinations.

While the one in question was moved to a transport by so

unexpected a piece of good fortune, the Druid, after vainly turning over the leaves of all his ancient manuscripts, at length bethought himself of his daughter, but believing her safe under the guardianship of Puncheon, he betook himself to the fountain of the bower, in order to dispose of the body of the unfortunate Prince of Noisy in the manner he had resolved on. No sooner, however, was he in the middle garden than he caught sight of the sylphs, some of whom were hiding behind the palisades, while others were flying at his approach ; he called to them in a loud voice, inquiring what they had done with the prince, but they seemed far from inclined to turn back and answer the question. When he found he could obtain no satisfaction, he hastened with all speed to the fountain, where he was not a little surprised at finding little Puncheon giving way to the most violent despair.

"What dost thou here ?" said the Druid, "and what has become of my daughter ?"

"Your daughter," replied the disconsolate Puncheon, "is in perfect safety, under the guardianship of the sylphs ; but as for the body of the Prince of Noisy, which I had taken charge of, it is lost in spite of all my care. I was weeping beside his corpse, deplored his cruel fate, and sympathising with the misfortunes of the fair Alie, when suddenly I beheld standing at my side a man whose aspect, next to that of yourself, was the most dignified and venerable of any in the whole wide world. After shedding tears at the melancholy adventure which I related to him in a few words, this man told me that, instead of shedding useless tears over the fate of him I regretted, I ought to perform the only duty which could now be paid him, that is, to plunge his body into the fountain in order to cleanse it of the blood with which it was stained, preparatory to your coming to burn it. I believed him ; but no sooner did the body of the Prince of Noisy touch the water, than it disappeared to the bottom in spite of all my efforts to retain it, and at the same moment the green bower rising to the surface, the man seized it and vanished before my eyes."

"All is over then !" cried the Druid, "cruel Merlin, thou hast vanquished at last ! but as for thee, wretch," said he, turning to Puncheon, "who hast filled up the measure of my woes, tremble at the punishment that awaits thee."

The miserable Puncheon was more dead than alive when he heard these words ; nevertheless the Druid had not yet learnt the full extent of his misfortunes. He conducted the guilty Puncheon to the statue of Cleopatra in order to shut him up therein : but this same statue which had opened without the assistance of the talisman when the knife was returned to it, now refused to open to admit Puncheon.

It was then that the Druid remembered he had left his ring upon his daughter's finger, and ran to the grove of Vestals to fetch it, but with how vain a result you need not be told. Hereupon fresh alarms seized upon the old Druid, who broke forth into fresh reproaches and fresh menaces towards the luckless Puncheon. He then hastened back to his palace in search of Alie, and failing to find her there, looked for her in every corner of the garden. He was nigh reduced to the last extremity of despair, when raising his eyes to heaven, as people do when overtaken by unforeseen disasters, he thought he discovered a new star there. There is no astronomer in the world whose grief, however intense, will not vanish at the prospect of a new discovery in the celestial regions. He perceived at once that it was either a comet or some other phenomenon, and the next minute he found that he could make nothing of it at all. It was some luminous object, which seemed suspended in the air, and grew bigger and bigger as it drew nearer to the earth. At last he discovered that it must be a chariot encircled with light, and that it was performing a vast circuit round the garden. When it had reached the height of the palisades, he saw that it was drawn by two unicorns carrying torches at the top of their horns. Soon after this chariot, whose appearance filled him with astonishment, alighted in the midst of the garden. As he was not a man to be alarmed at anything in the shape of a prodigy, he advanced towards the chariot. All the lights which he had seen up in the air he found were so many torches placed in sheaths which surrounded the chariot, and the horns of the animals drawing the chariot were nothing more than two large sheaths with each a lighted torch in it.

While the Druid's attention was entirely engrossed by this novel spectacle, the chariot opened, and gave egress to the Mother of Sheaths, who held forth her hand to him. She was

a woman of comely appearance, and who carried her years so well, that she appeared to be scarcely forty, whereas she was nearer four hundred. She wore an *andrienne* of crimson velvet, embroidered all over with golden sheaths. "Let some one who will answer for its safety take care of this coach," said she, addressing the Druid, "it may turn out of some assistance to you in your present difficulties. I did not know of them till to-day, when I found them out by chance; and I also found, on examining my books, that what I am in search of is not very far from here. It is not seven minutes since I left Moulins. I might, perhaps, have prevented the fatal accident which has just befallen you, had I known that which has so long been hidden from me. But come, we will go and repose ourselves within your palace."

The Druid called Puncheon, who was standing at a respectful distance, and commanded him, in a severe tone, to take the chariot into the grove of the Vestals, and there keep watch over it. On entering the palace, the Mother of Sheaths was struck at sight of the characters which the knife had traced on the marble floor. She trembled, and stood motionless before them.

"What do I see?" she exclaimed, "and by what accident has my precious knife escaped from the hands of the perfidious Merlin, that it might thus console you amidst your misfortunes in a language unknown to every other mortal?"

The Druid, struck with astonishment, without telling her, however, anything about his adventure with the knife, entreated her to explain the mystic words to him, since they appeared to concern himself. "This," said the Mother of Sheaths, "is their signification:"

Ill can ne'er befal your daughter
While the bower you retain;
Let the Ram avoid the water,
And his life will safe remain.

The learned Mabillon assures us, that at this interpretation the Druid turned as white as the ruffles of the Mother of Sheaths, but that nevertheless he would not inform her how matters really stood. The enchantress, observing his agitation, said to the Druid, "Let us pass into another apartment, where I may more conveniently acquaint you with certain matters

which have doubtless escaped that universal knowledge with which art and nature have endowed you." Whereupon the Druid conducted her into the gallery of paintings.

It was quite an enchanted spot. He had caused a set of furniture to be painted in fresco on the walls, in which gold was seen to sparkle amidst the most brilliant and variegated colours ; and so admirably was everything imitated, that no one would have taken it for anything but real tapestry. Grotesque figures, strange musical instruments, Chinese birds, and a thousand different sorts of Indian flowers, formed the chief subjects of the ornaments. The pictures, with which the apartment was hung, represented neither the past nor the present ; they would have been unworthy the science and the skill of the Druid. The finest piece which adorned this superb hall was the portrait of a great and august prince, who was destined in a future age to unite the vast empire of Gaul under his dominion, and whose glory should extend to undiscovered climes. The Mother of Sheaths recognised him, although he was not to be born till nine hundred years after ; and as soon as she had devoted some further attention to the rest of the ornaments, she seated herself on a magnificent couch, and made the Druid take his place beside her, that she might relate her adventures.

The Druid was in no fit state to pay any attention to the discourse of the Mother of Sheaths, for the interpretation she had given him of the characters in the state apartment, and the desire of recovering his daughter, so agitated his mind that, with all his efforts, he could barely control his feelings ; nevertheless he listened with apparent tranquillity to the enchantress, who spoke as follows :

STORY OF THE MOTHER OF SHEATHS.

" Although I know that you are acquainted with a portion of what concerns me, I am very certain that the most essential and the most singular portion is unknown to you ; and it is of this that I am now about to treat in the most succinct manner I can.

" I am a daughter of the first sovereign of Armorica. At my birth I received the name of Philoelea, a very different

one from that which popular tradition has for the last century bestowed on me. I came into the world with as much beauty as it is possible to have at so early a period ; but subsequently it became so marvellous that I grew to be considered a miracle of beauty ; and my stars, to which I was indebted for this advantage, had so ordered matters that I was endowed with wit surpassing even the brilliancy of my personal graces, and this saved me from being dazzled by them. Those whom my charms attracted only succeeded in engaging my attention in so far as they were distinguished by their genius or endowments. It was long ere I found one whom I considered worthy of my choice. Solitude was my whole delight, and reading my sole amusement. My father, the most magnificent prince of his age, was at the same time the most ignorant ; nevertheless, he had collected together at considerable expense the rarest and most curious books in the world, but never in his life had he opened a single volume. This library was my habitual refuge, and from my reading at that time, and my particular choice of books, I drew the first elements of that knowledge which has since acquired for me so much renown.

" An unceasing application, joined to the natural penetration of my mind, soon rendered me mistress of the most abstruse characters, and enabled me to decipher the obscure works with which this library was filled. The most precious of all these volumes, however, remained for a long time impenetrable to all my researches. It contained an infinite number of plants and flowers, sometimes mingled together, sometimes ranged in separate rows, and sometimes intermixed with the signs given by astronomers to the different planets and constellations. I made no doubt but these were hieroglyphics used instead of the various characters in which the other books were written. At length I succeeded in mastering this difficult language, unknown to all else, in spite of the barrier of mystery and enigma with which it was hedged round. I was but too richly rewarded for my pains and nightly vigils by the secrets which were revealed to me in this book.

" My father, who never found any other fault with me, than that of being too passionately devoted to reading, had frequently threatened me with having all these books thrown into the fire,

One day he came and tore me away from my library in order to take me out a hawking with him. I was drest in a hunting suit, and set on horseback. Thus equipped, and surrounded by a brilliant suite of both sexes, I eclipsed all the women, and charmed all the men, without being aware that I was doing either one or the other.

" We were in the midst of a vast plain, spreading on each side of a considerable river. As soon as the hawks were let fly a thousand shouts rent the air, and my horse taking fright carried me rapidly off in the direction of the river. He leapt in, and after swimming across it never ceased running until he was in the midst of a wood. I alighted, tied my horse to a tree, and charmed at the accident which had separated me from an importunate crowd, I began to walk about, and after some time, finding a suitable resting-place, I sat down on a bank of turf at the foot of an old oak. Here I gave myself up to my reflections. I was so absorbed that the day was already sinking when I was roused from them by rather a loud noise proceeding from the top of the tree against which I was reclining. It was a large owl, who was tumbling down from branch to branch, and having at last entangled himself by a number of straggling fibres hanging to his claws, I took him for the bird which had been the object of our sport. Birds of this species are usually the common butt and laughing-stock of all the rest. But as I was of quite a different feeling, I set him free. Instead of flying away, however, when I had liberated him, he set himself on the ground within two paces of me, and looked at me fixedly. The gathering darkness was beginning to allow him the use of his eyes, of which the light of day had deprived him. Instead of speaking to me (as I expected he was about to do) after ogling me so long, he gave a little cry, fluttered his wings, and flew away. His flight was not rapid, and perching himself on an oak within ten paces, he uttered another cry. I drew near, but the owl vanished, and I beheld a ray of light shining from the place where I had last seen him. A few minutes after, several lighted torches appeared in the wood, and a party of those who had been dispatched in search of me in every direction, having found me out, I returned to the court of my father at an advanced hour of the night.

" From that day forth I was forbidden to go into the library ; all that was allowed me was a single book. It was that containing the hieroglyphics ; and as my father fancied I had it only to look at the pictures, I was allowed to take it with me in my solitary walks. They were usually in the direction of the wood where I had seen the owl. One day I had penetrated a considerable way into it after leaving my attendants behind, that I might be more at liberty. I wished to stay until sunset, in the hopes of seeing the owl again. I examined every tree with care, but without discovering that from which I had seen the ray of light shining ; at last, having tired myself out in this fruitless search, I lay down on the grass and fell into a profound sleep. It was of no long duration, and what caused me to wake up was feeling myself almost in the arms of a man, or rather of one of those half-human figures such as satyrs are painted. His face was similar to theirs, and, although he had neither their horns nor their hoofs, his body was bristling with frightful hair. My struggles and my screams would perhaps have been vain, had not the most terrible owl that could possibly exist scared the monster away. He retired a short distance, and raising his eyes to see whence the cry came, beheld at the same time that I did a luminous object in the claws of the owl, who, swooping down upon him, stretched him at my feet. I thought he was struck by lightning : the earth was bathed in his blood, and notwithstanding my horror of him, I could not refrain approaching him to satisfy my curiosity as to how he had received this deadly blow. He had fallen on his back, and I beheld the handle of a knife, the whole blade of which appeared buried in his heart. On drawing it out, every portion of the blade which was not covered with blood dazzled my eyes by its extreme lustre. As soon as I was in possession of the knife I fancied myself mistress of the most precious treasure in the world, nor was I mistaken. I wished to cleanse the blade by dipping it into a clear spring issuing from a rock within a few steps of where I stood, but it was in vain, for the water only made the blood-marks brighter. This prodigy astonished me, but soon a fresh miracle increased my astonishment. I was pressing the point of the knife against the rock, to see if I could not thus efface the marks, when the knife appeared animated by an impulse to which I yielded,

and following the movements which it gave my hand, I traced a number of hieroglyphics. The words formed by them were in the same language as that written in your state apartment, and which I had learnt in the book before-mentioned. This is what was written on the rock:

“Beauty, whose youthful heart hath paid
No tribute yet to tyrant love,
Whilst thou dost keep this magic blade,
A trusty guardian it will prove.”

“I have given these early incidents of my life at some length, because they were unknown to you ; of the rest I shall speak more succinctly.

“I possessed two inestimable treasures, which by raising me above all ordinary knowledge, left me no inclination but for the most sublime speculations. All the means I had employed to cleanse my knife of the blood which stained it, had failed. One day I took it into my head to scrape it with the point of a golden bodkin ; the gold melted, and the blood-stains disappearing without leaving the faintest trace, the knife once more became as bright as the stars of heaven. I consulted it in every strait, and always succeeded in overcoming my difficulties by attending to its injunctions. I know now that it is only while it is stained with blood that it expresses itself in this unknown language. I have sometimes fancied that it was the knife with which Apollo flayed Marsyas, on account of its uttering oracles, and uttering them always in verse. But to conclude.

“I remained with my father, refusing offers with which I was unceasingly tormented, and retaining all the brilliancy of my youthful charms ; while I beheld those of my own age gradually lose theirs with the flight of time. I perceived that people grew tired of a beauty with which they had become familiar, and tired of it myself, I left my native soil to make fresh discoveries in foreign countries. I visited Egypt, Africa, Persia, and the Indies. Several centuries having elapsed during these different voyages, and the long stay I made in these regions, I determined at length to return to Europe, and enrich it with the result of so many labours and such arduous researches. I found the reputation of the renowned

Merlin universally spread abroad. The desire of ascertaining whether his science was in reality so marvellous as to deserve this reputation, caused me to make a journey into England. When I performed this voyage, I assumed the appearance which I now present, and found Merlin equal to all that had been rumoured of him. He is of illustrious extraction, being descended like myself from the first sovereigns of Armorica, whose descendants established themselves in the province of Cornwall, of which Merlin is invested with the dukedom.

"The favour of the King of England threw a halo of distinction about Merlin, of which I found him perfectly deserving. I was delighted with his wit, but with his natural disposition I was not so well satisfied, although he concealed it as much as he was able, under a great show of sincerity, but which was only the mask of a degree of artifice, amounting almost to downright knavery. I soon discovered that all his eagerness to make himself agreeable to me, and to insinuate himself in my good graces, was with an interested motive. He frequently spoke to me of the marvellous Philoclea, mentioned in some chronicle of Brittany, and whom some supposed to be still among the living. He also mentioned an enchanted knife which had rendered this famous beauty immortal; and while he was speaking of these things, he fixed his eyes on me with scrutinising attention. This was quite sufficient to awaken my apprehensions; accordingly, I had recourse to my knife, which informed me that Merlin was aiming at the possession of the most precious of my treasures. All my science being insufficient to secure me against the stratagems of a man who appeared to have discovered my identity, I quitted England and took refuge at the foot of the Apennines, where, in order to evade his pursuit and his designs against me, I assumed the appearance of decrepitude. Nevertheless, all my precautions proved unavailing, and the traitor ended by robbing me of my knife.

"You already know a part of what subsequently befel me; you know the object of all those sheaths which have acquired me the name of the Mother of Sheaths; and you also know the motive of my visit to France. I am acquainted with the events which have befallen you during the last two days; and I am come hither in order to offer you the assistance of my skill in conjunction with your own. The perfidious Merlin, banished

from England, has not only found an asylum in the court of Pepin, but the favour into which he has newly risen there, has put him in possession of the principality of Noisy ; and here he has brought up his son in the same fear of your vicinage as you have always entertained of his. You see that the stars have laughed at all the precautions which both of you have taken to keep asunder two hearts whose mutual affection was destined to be so fatal to their union. The book I mentioned to you has informed me of all these things, and promises me the recovery of the treasure which Merlin stole from me. I know the means of rescuing his son from the jaws of death ; and it is only by restoring this son to him that I can obtain from the enchanter the restitution of my knife. It is for you to inform me by what chance it escaped from his hands, to become the instrument of his son's murder, and to trace the characters which I have just read upon the marble of your apartment."

The Druid, overwhelmed with affliction, unable any longer to constrain himself, and feeling, moreover, how much the assistance of the enchantress was needful to him, threw himself at her feet, and bathing her knees in tears, acquainted her with the existing state of affairs.

"What!" cried the Mother of Sheaths, "the Prince of Noisy has disappeared in the fountain! Alie's bower, after appearing on the surface of the water, has been carried off by Merlin! (for be sure it is no other than he who has committed this robbery,) and your daughter is lost! Was there ever such a string of misfortunes! The loss of Alie, which seems to afflict you more than any other, fills me with apprehensions for your sake, for you cannot find her until you recover the bower; and how can you expect such an event when your most cruel enemy is in possession of it? And that enemy, the same Merlin, who, in spite of all my precautions, robbed me of my knife!" As she spoke these words, a few tears trickled from the eyes of the enchantress, and in a tone full of the deepest sorrow, she repeated the verses which the knife had traced in the forest.

"Whilst thou dost keep this magic blade,
A trusty guardian it will prove."

"Such were thy injunctions," she continued, "precious
M M 2

treasure, which I so feared to lose, and whose loss has cost me such bitter pangs of remorse—pangs which I shall never cease to feel. Alas ! what more could I do to preserve thee ? Why didst thou not preserve me likewise according to thy promise, when the enchanted chariot appeared before me in the wilderness of the Apennines ? ”

The Druid, at this outbreak of grief on the part of the Mother of Sheaths, thought he could not select a more propitious moment for informing her that this knife, so precious to her, and so much regretted, was in his possession, and at the same time offering to restore it to her. She was so transported with delight at this piece of intelligence, that she had nigh fallen into a swoon. The Druid conducted her to the statue of Cleopatra, forgetting, however, that he no longer possessed the ring which alone had the power of opening it. Accordingly, he stopt short before the statue, and was forced to confess to the enchantress that, together with his daughter, he had also lost the talisman which was upon her finger, informing her at the same time that this ring was the only key to the statue in which her knife was enclosed. The enchantress, in a state of despair, resolved to employ her whole science in order to triumph over the obstacles which stood between her and the object of all her desires. She told the Druid to command Puncheon that he should seek Alie under all possible shapes, and meanwhile she would apply herself to recover possession of the bower.

Let us return now to the fair Alie, whom we left throwing herself into the arms of the giant. Such a situation, had it been any one but Alie, would have inspired me with certain apprehensions ; but great was the virtue of the ancient talismans, and greater still the faith of those who believed in them. The charming Alie who imagined herself running after the shade of her beloved lover, expected to embrace nothing but empty space ; judge of her surprise at finding herself in the arms of a solid and tolerably substantial body. Her fright at once restored her to reason ; and perceiving the danger into which she had rushed of her own accord, she uttered a thousand screams and struggled violently to disengage herself from the grasp of the giant, who far from allowing his prey to escape, however, carried her off to his own quarters without once

allowing her feet to touch the ground. With what terror was she now seized on finding herself locked up, and reflecting that on one and the same day she had stabbed the object of all her affections and had fallen into the clutches of a monster whom she detested.

The giant asked her why she had uttered so many cries in pronouncing the name of the Prince of Noisy. She informed him that it was because she had slain him with her own hand. The giant wanted to embrace her in order to testify his gratitude ; but this mode of expressing his thanks being repulsed, he inquired what had become of the Ram.

" He is dead ! " she exclaimed. " It was I who slew him. Oh hapless Prince of Noisy ! —it was I who—"

The Lord of Moulineau, in a transport of rage, without giving Alie time to finish her speech, or consulting his passion for her, dealt her a box on the ears which stretched her at his feet, and was inclined to cut off her head to avenge the murder she had just confessed.

" Wretch ! " cried the giant, roughly raising her up, " see what thy perfidy has brought on thee. But for the deed thou hast confess, I should this night, booted and spurred, have received thee into my bed. If thou hast indeed slain the Ram, think not to escape my vengeance. I will first lock thee up in his chamber, and then set about learning the truth of this. Tremble if my favourite be dead ! Thy father shall be my first victim, and when I am tired of making my pastime of thee, thou shalt be buried alive ! "

After uttering this terrible threat, the giant locked Alie in the little hut formerly inhabited by the defunct Ram, where he gave her time to reflect, while he snored away the remainder of the night. The next day the cruel Moulineau set out on his campaign.

The unfortunate Alie, who could imagine no more terrible prospect than that held out by the giant, began to revolve in her mind by what kind of death she could evade this misfortune. Looking around her in all directions she beheld the name of Alie engraven all over the walls; not doubting but it was the handiwork of the faithful and high-minded Ram, she gave way to a fresh outburst of grief, which was interrupted by her perceiving the book which she had thrown from the window

of the Druid's castle to the Prince of Noisy. Leaning her hand against the door of the hut for support, the ring touched it and it flew open. As you may easily imagine, Alie's astonishment was soon succeeded by her eagerness to avail herself of so fortunate an accident, and to make her escape with the book. She took good care, however, not to turn in the direction of her father's garden, whither she knew the giant had betaken himself. To avoid meeting him, therefore, she took a long round, and after walking some time perceived a wood which she entered, intending there to await the night. This wood formed a portion of the forest of Noisy. As soon as she was advanced far enough into it to think herself safe, she threw herself down at the foot of a tree, overwhelmed with grief, terror, and fatigue. Could she have known what was going on elsewhere, she would have been spared much anxiety.

Little Puncheon, under the exact semblance of the Ram, had quitted the Druid's mansion at about the same time that the giant was leaving his own abode. They failed not to meet, and from the moment the giant descried his beloved favourite from a distance he began to repent his ill-treatment of the lovely Alie, and ran towards him radiant with joy, fully persuaded that he was come to seek him in order to put him in possession of his enemy's treasure. But he was not a little surprised to see his favorite, instead of waiting for him, take to his heels in another direction; and though he ran after him, calling and threatening as he ran, the Ram never stopped. This flight, on the one part, and pursuit on the other, over the most irregular ground that little Puncheon could select, lasted so long, that the giant was fain to surrender; and after having taken an enormous round, seeing himself close to his quarters, he resolved to go and fetch his great horse that he might bring the deserter whom he had so long and so vainly pursued, to an account.

As soon as the giant had desisted from his pursuit, the Ram started off as hard as he could gallop, and after making a survey of every place in the neighbourhood, at last reached that part of the forest of Noisy which poor Alie had selected for her retreat. He found her at the very moment that, taking the prettiest garter in the world from the prettiest leg that ever was formed, she was about to hang the most charming

and the most disconsolate creature that ever existed. The appearance of the Ram prevented the accomplishment of her desperate resolve. No words can express her joy and astonishment at seeing him.

"Is it thou?" she cried, embracing him; "is it thou, dear prince? do I behold thee once more in that odious shape which so deceived me?"

Little Puncheon wept as she began to feel his side in search of the wound she had inflicted, and hesitated to discover himself, dreading to cloud the joy with which the delusion inspired her. It was, however, necessary that he should resume his own shape, and seeing the affliction of Alie at the change, he conjured her to be calm, telling her that much was to be hoped from the assistance promised them by the Mother of Sheaths, whose arrival he informed her of. Alie, yielding to the flattering hopes held out by Puncheon, was at last persuaded to follow him to her father's abode.

While they were proceeding together, the amiable Puncheon, who had taken charge of the book in order to relieve Alie of its weight, said to her:—

"Fair mistress, could you but know the joy which you are about to occasion your father the Druid, by bringing back this book to him, your grief would greatly diminish. It is filled with the most precious secrets of nature, and the prettiest stories in the world. To make the journey appear less tedious and to divert your affliction I will relate one to you, for my master would sometimes allow me to read it. As for him he never took the trouble to read the stories with which it is filled."

"There was once upon a time in Lower Brittany a Druid, who was called Gaspard the Wise. So wise was he, indeed, that he had written a big book which contained all the wisdom of the world. He had also invented a new language, composed of flowers, plants, planets, and I can't tell you how many things besides. Now this Gaspard the Wise had a son who was so handsome that he fell in love with himself. There was nothing he took such delight in as looking all day at his own reflection in the water. This was why his father called him Narcissus. Nevertheless, he was so afflicted at the foolish conduct of his son, that one day he called him into his laboratory, and after scolding him well for his unmanly vanity, "My

son," said he, "thou would'st never be good for anything wert thou to remain with me. I am therefore about to entrust thee with a commission which will cause thee to see something of the world. But on this condition, that thou never seest thyself again, for if ever thou lookest at thyself in the water, thou wilt become so frightfully ugly that thou wilt be disgusted with thine own face ; and if ever this should happen, she alone who is able to read and understand what is written in my book can restore to thee that beauty which has turned thy head, and which thou wilt then despise in order to love that of another. Moreover, when thou recoverest thy beauty, thou wilt become imbued with all my knowledge, as likewise will she into whose hands my book is destined to fall, if she shall succeed in deciphering a language invented by myself alone. Listen to what I am about to relate.

" ' In the world there is a forest, and in this forest there is a tree which is very hard to find ; and in this tree there is a golden sheath, which is made of such gold as will not melt when it touches the knife which I am about to give thee. This sheath you must seek, find, and bring back to me.'

" ' So saying, he gave him the knife, embraced him with affection, and bade him go. But he was no sooner out of his sight, than he repented parting with him ; and a prey to the continual fears with which the perils that threatened his beloved son inspired him, he died shortly after the departure of Narcissus.

" ' Narcissus, in obedience to his father's commands, wandered through every wood and forest, and examined every tree in them to find the golden sheath, but without success. History tells us that he was three years travelling twenty leagues, so much time did he spend in the different forests on his road. At the end of these three years he reached the court of Prince Keraliosmadec, who was then reigning in Brittany ; but as the sheath he was in search of was not to be found at the courts of princes, he came no nearer to it than was necessary to visit all the neighbouring woods. One of these in particular, a very pleasant one, was surrounded almost entirely by a river, the waters of which were as clear as crystal. This river he had to cross, in order to get into the forest ; but as he was crossing it, his curiosity to see if the fatigue of his travels had in any way

diminished his beauty, overcame the impression of his father's threats, and he bent down his head over the surface of the water.

"' What was his surprise, instead of beholding the face of the beautiful Narcissus, to see that of a large owl. The cry of horror which the spectacle wrung from him, frightened him still more, for it was that of a veritable owl, and ere he had time to utter a second, he was changed to an owl from top to toe. He retained his reason, however ; he was blest with so little, indeed, that it would scarcely have been worth while to deprive him of it. At the same moment he lost his sight, and was almost driven to despair at the loss ; but when night came he recovered it, and took refuge in the wood.

"' Miserable enough was the life which the unhappy Narcissus led here, hiding himself all day in the hollow of a tree, and spending his nights feasting off a few wretched mice, and seeking the sheath of the knife which he had still carefully kept in his possession. So industrious was his search, that he at last found the tree, conducted to it by the lustre of the marvellous sheath amidst the surrounding darkness. But he could never succeed in taking it away from the tree, nor in putting his knife into it. He spent the greater part of his nights in vain efforts to effect both one and the other ; but all he could do was to hide his knife in the same tree close to the sheath. At last, I forget now in what manner, he was rescued from his embarrassment by a certain princess. This princess was so beautiful that he became enamoured of her. She frequently came to walk in this wood ; but unfortunately he could never see her but when she stayed until it was night. It was on one of these occasions, that, having fallen asleep at the foot of a tree, from which the owl was contemplating her beauty, she was awoke by the assault of a savage. The enamoured owl had recourse to his knife, and saved her in some way which I have forgotten ; however, he lost his knife, and the beauty carried it off. The loss of this knife would have driven the owl to despair, had it not fallen into the hands of the loveliest creature in the world. This charming princess soon discovered its virtues. Having remained one day in the wood until nightfall, she rested the point of her knife against a smooth stone ; the faithful owl had placed himself beside

without being perceived ; the knife began to write of its own accord, as was its custom ; and this is what it wrote :—

“Maiden, with the magic knife
Pluck the bird that sav'd your life !”

“As soon as this charming princess had become possessed of the knife, she had sworn that she would always comply with whatever it enjoined her. Wishing to obey its commands on the present occasion, she turned round to look for the owl, and to her great delight found him by her side. She immediately seized hold of him, and with her knife began to pluck him, though not without some remorse at her severe treatment of him after receiving so signal a service at his hands. As she continued to pluck him, the beautiful Narcissus gradually resumed his original appearance.

“The princess was no way alarmed at this prodigy, and the story goes, that though the loss of his feathers left him quite naked, she took care not to leave a single feather unplucked. At the same moment he felt himself imbued with all the science of his father, the departed Gaspard the Wise. Accordingly he requested the princess to allow him to become invisible until he should have procured himself garments, and promised that he would meet her the next day under an arbour in her father's garden. It was then that she became enamoured of his beauty, on which he had now ceased to set any store ; it was in that happy spot, the secret witness of their bliss, that they were wedded to each other, and mutually exchanged all the science and all the secrets of which each was possessed. He bestowed on her that of never dying and never appearing old ; he then made her swear that she would never part with her knife, on the possession of which their mutual happiness depended, and never to speak to any one of their adventure nor of their union. For a length of time they led together the happiest of lives, nor was it ever known to anybody, on account of the secret which the happy Narcissus possessed of rendering himself invisible. He admonished her that it was useless to plague herself with trying to remove the golden sheath from the tree in which it was placed, as this was an achievement reserved to another ; but, notwithstanding this, the possession of the knife could

never be secured to her except by that of the sheath. I cannot remember now from what motives they were induced to quit their country, but after travelling about all over the world, Narcissus still remaining invisible, and the princess appearing just as beautiful as she pleased, they at last settled themselves at the base of a mountain. One day as the princess was taking a walk, she beheld, descending from the summit of the mountain, a flaming chariot; out of this chariot there came an enchanter who showed her the sheath belonging to her knife, and, kneeling down before her, informed her that he had long sought her, that he might present her with this treasure, which was of no use in any hands but hers. He added that none but himself could place the knife into its sheath. The princess was so delighted at receiving the golden sheath that, without reflecting on the risk she was incurring, she gave him the treasured knife that he might thrust it into the sheath; but no sooner was it in the enchanter's hand than he immediately vanished.'

"I should weary you, my lovely mistress, were I to describe the despair of the astonished princess at beholding in her hands the useless sheath of the knife which she had just lost. But alas! what was her grief, and to what a plight was she reduced when on returning to relate her adventure to her beloved Narcissus, he was no longer to be found. The time she spent in seeking him all over the world is beyond all reckoning, but she could hear no tidings of him, nor of her knife; for only on recovering the knife can she ever be restored to the arms of her dear spouse. Settling in these regions, affliction having soured the native kindness of her disposition, she began to persecute with the most frightful misfortunes two lovers whose history I will relate to you when the cessation of your own disasters has left your mind in a better disposition to hear it."

When little Puncheon had finished his story, he discovered that he had missed his way in the forest; and turn which way he would to find the road which led to the Druid's garden he never could find the right one. At last he was forced to yield to the invisible power by which he was conducted, together with the fair Alie, into the midst of the palace of the Prince of Noisy.

They arrived just as Merlin the enchanter was giving orders for the performance of the last mournful duties with which he desired to honour the remains of his beloved son. The whole place was a scene of general lamentation. The body of the handsome prince had past by a subterraneous communication from the fountain of the bower into that which formed the principal ornament of the gardens of the palace of Noisy. The beautiful corpse was stretched upon a heap of flowers near the funeral pile, upon which it was about to be burnt ; and the green bower ornamented with wreaths of similar flowers was at its feet.

This spectacle threw the tender-hearted Alie into a state of despair, which she concealed, however, from little Puncheon, lest he should prevent her from throwing herself, as she meditated doing, into the midst of the flames in which the body of her lover was about to be consumed. Puncheon, who, in spite of himself, had been led to another place than that he was seeking, had hidden himself together with Alie behind a palisade, nor could he prevail upon Alie to tear herself from this cruel and mournful spectacle.

Everything being prepared for the ceremony, the inconsolable Merlin ordered the body of the prince to be placed upon the top of the pile, in the midst of aromatic gums and the most delicious perfumes of Araby ; he directed the green bower to be placed at his feet, and raising a torch above his head, lifted his eyes to heaven, exclaiming :—

“ Inhuman Alie, beauty so fatal to my repose, and more so still to the most faithful of lovers, come and glut thy cruelty by beholding the victim of thy barbarity devoted to the flames ! But tremble, shudder at the horrors which everywhere will beset thee when thy bower is reduced to ashes.”

So saying, he was about to set fire to the pile, while the unhappy Alie was preparing to precipitate herself into the flames, when the sound of loud cries in the air caused every one to raise their eyes. Merlin stood still, and after a few moments beheld the Mother of Sheaths descending in her chariot, accompanied by the Druid.

“ My lovely mistress,” cried Puncheon, “ let us run to the Mother of Sheaths. Behold her ; she has doubtless come to our assistance, together with my lord, the Druid, your father.”

When they were alighted from the chariot, the Mother of Sheaths took the torch out of the hands of Merlin, while the Druid removed the ring from Alie's finger and gave it to little Puncheon, commanding him to hasten with all the speed he could and bring back the enchanted knife, not forgetting the precious gold in which it was preserved. On beholding the Mother of Sheaths, Merlin was filled at the same time with joy and apprehension ; he knew how justly he deserved her reproaches, and how much she had it in her power to oblige him. While the enchantress was loading Merlin with complaints, and Merlin was overwhelming her with apologies, and entreating her to allow her generosity to get the better of her vengeance, little Puncheon was seen returning radiant with the light that shone forth from the gold and the knife which he was carrying. The Mother of Sheaths started, and almost swooned away with joy at the sight. She received it from the hands of the Druid, and, raising her voice,

" Let the prince descend from the pile," she exclaimed ; " he has not yet beheld the gloomy shores of Acheron. This knife was never fatal to any but malefactors and criminals."

But why should I lengthen this narrative by a tedious detail of circumstances just as the tale is drawing to a close ? All the personages interested in these adventures now beheld the crowning of their desires. The Mother of Sheaths found her knife ; the Druid his book ; and Alie her lover. Our hero, who was only dangerously wounded, was in the hands of three individuals, whose skill could have resuscitated all the defunct heroes from the days of Cyrus the Great ; and uniting their several powers together, as they did, in favour of the handsome Prince of Noisy, it may easily be surmised that he was soon restored to the lovely Alie with more beauty, more charms, and more affection than ever. The rosy blushes of Aurora threw a soft light over this resurrection ; and the sun, who had retired on the previous night, leaving behind him a scene of grief and lamentation, beheld on his return a spectacle of universal joy.

It was in the midst of this joy that the giant Moulineau, mounted on his enormous courser, wound his horn twice at the gate of the castle, and demanded his prisoner and his Ram ; in default whereof he challenged all the inhabitants to mortal combat. Alie's lover, desirous of distinguishing himself in the

eyes of his mistress, accepted the challenge, and sent him word that the Prince of Noisy, newly returned from a long voyage, would grant him a meeting three days thence upon the bridge constructed by his Ram, there to fight out their quarrel, and sword in hand, battle for the hand of the charming Alie.

This same charming Alie, in the transports of her delight at the unlooked-for change that had come over her fortunes, felt a thousand times more love for the Prince of Noisy, in his natural shape, than she had ever felt hatred for him when disguised in the semblance of a Ram. It became him, accordingly, as the wittiest and most gallant prince of his age, to find language that might worthily express his gratitude, and cause her to forget the misfortunes of the past.

Alie, whose curiosity was as great as her affection, desired to be informed how her lover had come to be transformed into a Ram. Whereupon he related to her that having yielded himself on the night when she had thrown him the book, to the tide of his reflections, he had wandered unconsciously to the banks of the Seine, where, at dawn of day, he was seized with a curiosity to spy into its contents, and finding nothing in it but the signs of the zodiac, he had fell to contemplating that of the Ram. Unable to resist reading what was written beneath it, he was pronouncing for the third time the mysterious words when suddenly he found himself transformed into a Ram. It were useless, he continued, to describe the astonishment and despair that seized me ; it was at their first outbreak that the giant and his pack of dogs fell in with me, and I should certainly have been throttled to death had not my appearance by some accident found favour in his eyes ; and from that time I have not quitted his service.

Meanwhile, I continued every day to decipher some portions of the book in spite of its obscurity, and conceived hopes that, by its assistance, I should some day be able to recover my original shape. It was by means of this book that in a moment I was enabled to raise up a bridge ; it also enabled me to recover the use of speech, it taught me how to render myself invisible on the day that I answered the lamentations of the lovely Alie, and finally it informed me of the liquid gold which was in the possession of the Druid, and which would deliver me from the spell by which I was bound as soon as it touched

my body. "This it was, fair Alie," continued the prince, "that made me determine on the visit to your father's abode, where, however, I had no intention of presenting you with a victim ; and so astounded was I at your indignant demonstrations ere you plunged the knife into my heart, that I received the blow almost with indifference."

The conclusion of this narrative renewed the affliction and the remorse of Alie ; but the presence of her dear prince soon consoled her, especially when she heard Merlin and the Druid concerting together that they should be united within three days.

This happy day was also that agreed upon for the combat with the giant ; and in spite of fair Alie's fears, who could not well understand how a man professing to be deeply in love, could go out and fight on the very day that he was to possess the object of his love ; in spite of all her fears, I say, the Prince of Noisy kept his word.

You cannot entertain a doubt, mademoiselle, but that this combat terminated as all combats terminate between giants and heroes. The Lord of Moulineau was upset at the first tilt, and tumbling over head and heels from the highest point of the bridge to the bottom of the moat, broke his neck without meeting with sympathy from any of the spectators. Never were nuptials celebrated with so much pomp and magnificence, and never were wedded pair happier.

Such is the result of the learned Mabillon's researches on the subject of these adventures, and this is what he adds respecting the change in the name concerning which you desired to be enlightened.

Pont d'Alie was the gentle name
Bestow'd on this locality,
Which, by a luckless destiny,
With Moulineau beheld its fame
Condemned to blank obscurity ;
And though you've striven to reclaim
Its ancient title's cephony,
Corruption still the sound doth main,
And turns it into Pontalie.

THE ENCHANTER FAUSTUS.

A Tale.

BEAUTEOUS Daphne, lost in pleasure,
To thee a confidence I made,
And now repent me at my leisure
That e'er my secret I betray'd,
When talking of the love and mirth,
With all the thousand joys of earth,
Your lovely sight at once inspired me,
Amid those bright and charming places,
Wherein the Syrens and the Graces
Might otherwise have touched and fired me.
I know with what contempt you turn
From all who at your beauty's shrine
Would kneel as to a saint divine,
And their adoring incense burn.
For I have seen you many a time,
When any captivated elf
Who dared to print your charms in rhyme
Had best have kept it to himself.
Then why with such a merit rare
Amongst the lovely and the fair,
Would you I should the truth forget,
And pay with spurious coin my debt.

Which in a few words, mademoiselle, signifies that you have been, I know not how long, persecuting me for a miserable piece of writing unworthy both of you and of myself. You insist upon seeing it, although I told you I had endeavoured to introduce certain traits of resemblance to yourself, and yet you will not allow that anything which is drawn for you gives

any notion of your appearance, so fearful are you that you are flattered when one has but simply caught your likeness! This kind of criticism is enough to puzzle any painter; and with a view to throw your delicacy off the scent, I must tell you a tale in which you shall figure at full length, and yet find nothing to quarrel with.

Queen Elizabeth, in whose reign a great-grandfather of my lady, your mother, was lord high admiral of Ireland, was a princess wonderful alike for wisdom, knowledge, magnificence, and greatness of character. So far, so good; but she was as envious as a dog, and withal jealous and cruel, and this marred all the rest.

Not that in speaking thus I would
Such cruelty were understood
As beauties use, who martyrise
The slaves of their unrivall'd eyes.
For on this point our noble queen
Had little cruelty, I ween;
And history has strangely doubted
Whether the silken bonds she scouted
On such a very squeamish plea;
Or from some more material cause
Had spurn'd the hymeneal laws,
For if the naked truth be said,
She was a most eccentric maid.

Be this as it might, common report, which never fails to give the bad side with the good, had borne her reputation into the very depths of Germany, whence a certain personage immediately set out by post to betake himself to her court. His name was Faust, but it is not unlikely we may hereafter call him Faustus, for the convenience of the rhyme in case the fancy should take us to put him into verse. This Faustus, a great magician by profession, conceived a desire to ascertain in person, whether the aforesaid Elizabeth, whereof such wonders were related, was indeed as marvellously endowed with good qualities as she was curst with bad. He was in every way fitted to judge of the matter; for there was nothing took place up aloft in the region of stars and planets but he knew of it, and Satan was as obedient to his beck as a poodle.

He had an endless stock of little secrets to create amusement, and could perform a variety of tricks of legerdemain, which, like chips in porridge, did neither good nor harm ; as, for instance, he would set you a duchess running over hill and dale after her coachman, and make an archbishop spend whole days writing sonnets to his kitchen wench, and whole nights serenading under her windows. It was he who first set the fashion in England of putting, on certain days of the year, rosemary, dandelion, woodcock's bones, and the like curious matters under the bolsters of young maidens, that they might dream of him who should help them to be so no longer. The queen, who was charmed with all the pretty things that were said of him, was eager to behold him ; and as soon as she obtained an interview, nearly went out of her wits with admiration of his profound knowledge and agreeable manners. She had always believed herself a match for all the world in wit, nor was she far out in her reckoning ; she also thought herself the greatest beauty in her kingdom, but in this she was egregiously mistaken.

One day being decked out with more than usual magnificence in order to receive some ambassadors, she had retired after the ceremony into her private closet, where she summoned our doctor to her presence.

After admiring herself for some time in two or three large mirrors, she appeared mightily pleased with herself.

She was as blushing as the rose
That in the eastern day-dawn glows ;
The lily and the jessamine
Were not more fair than was her skin,
For beauty's tints you know are sold,
They lack it not, who buy with gold.
Her shorten'd petticoat display'd
Her leg, as 'twas by nature made,
And as she sate, against her chair,
She bent with grace until her breast
Peep'd from her richly jewell'd vest,
While on her hand her diamonds rare
Glitter'd and blazed and flash'd their best.

She was in this position when the enchanter Faustus made

his appearance. He was the most accomplished courtier, for a conjuror, the world ever saw, and knowing the queen's weakness with respect to her imaginary beauty, he took good care not to lose so precious an opportunity of paying her his court. Accordingly, playing the part of the astounded Esther, he staggered back three steps as though about to fall in a swoon. Whereupon the queen asking him if he felt ill, he replied, "No, thank God, but the glory of Ahasuerus has overpowered me." The queen, who had the Old and New Testament by heart, considered the allusion as just as it was ingenious, but not having her sceptre about her at the time that she might give him the end of it to kiss as a token of favour, she contented herself with drawing a ruby ring from her alabaster finger, with which he was just as well contented.

"For a queen, then," she said, "you think we make a tolerable figure;" at the same time she moistened her lips with the tip of her tongue as though quite unconsciously; whereupon he swore the devil might have him (and the prospect was no new one to the devil) if there then existed, or ever had existed her equal, crowned or uncrowned.

"O Faustus, my friend," said she, "if the famous beauties of antiquity could but return, it would soon be apparent that you flatter us."

"Would your majesty wish to see them?" he replied. "Let her but speak and she may satisfy her conscience at once."

The doctor's proposal was snapt at forthwith, whether from the queen's desire to put his magical science to the proof by so marvellous an application of it, or for the satisfaction of a curiosity she had long entertained.

You must not, however, imagine, Mademoiselle, that what I am about to relate to you is a mere fable and the coinage of my own brain. The event is handed down in the memoirs of one of the wits of that day, Sir Philip Sydney, a sort of favourite of the queen's, who has narrated the adventure at length among some other occurrences of his life, and I have it from the late Duke of Ormond, your grand uncle, who frequently related it to me as a matter of history.

The story goes on to say, then, that our conjuror requested the queen to step into a little gallery close to her apartment while he went to fetch his wand, his book, and his long black

robe. He was not long ere he returned with all his talismans and paraphernalia. The gallery had two doors, one at each end ; by one of these the personages whom her majesty desired to behold were to enter, and by the other to depart. Only two persons more in addition to the queen were admitted to the spectacle ; one of these was Lord Essex, and the other Sydney, the author of the memoirs.

The queen was posted about the middle of the gallery, and her two favourites on either side of her arm-chair, while the magician began, as a matter of course, to draw round them a mysterious circle, which he did with all the ceremonies usually employed on such occasions. He then drew another directly opposite, for himself to stand in, leaving a space between, through which the actors were to pass. Thereupon, he intreated the queen not to utter a word so long as they remained on the stage, and above all not to alarm herself at anything she might see. This latter precaution was somewhat superfluous with respect to her, for the good lady feared neither God nor devil. Having imparted this admonition, he asked her which of the defunct beauties she desired to behold first ; to which she replied that to follow the proper chronological order, he ought to begin with Helen of Troy. Whereupon the necromancer, whose countenance appeared to undergo a slight change, called to them to "stand firm." Sydney confesses in his memoirs that at this point of the magical operations his heart began to beat a little, adding that the brave Lord Essex turned as white as a sheet, but that not a trace of any emotion was visible in the queen. It was then that :—

After an incantation mutter'd
Sotto voce it is said,
And sundry other mummeries utter'd,
The doctor Faustus raised his head,
And seeing our two heroes dying
With fright, said, like a fury crying
Daughter of Leda, from your tomb
In all your ancient beauty come,
Such as you were in olden time,
When upon Ida's mountain shone
That beauty sparkling as its clime,
And Paris claim'd thee as his own.

After this invocation the lovely Helen could not reasonably keep them waiting ; accordingly she appeared at the end of the gallery without any one perceiving how she had come in. She was attired in a Greek costume, and our author's memoirs state that her dress differed in nothing from that worn by our opera goddesses. Her head-dress was composed of a number of feathers drooping over her head, and fastened together by an *aigrette* of dazzling appearance. Her black curls reached down to her waist in front, and behind to the small of her back ; her love-locks danced pleasantly against her knees as she walked, and her train, which she dragged behind her *à la Lacédémone*, took up at least four yards of rich Corinthian brocade. This figure walked a certain time before the company, and then turning face to face with the queen, that she might have a better view of her, took leave of her with a kind of half-pleasant, half-haggard smile, and went out by the other door.

As soon as she had disappeared, the queen exclaimed, “ What ! is that the lovely Helen ? Well, I don’t plume myself on my beauty,” she continued, “ but may I die, if I would change faces with her, even if it were possible.”

“ I told your majesty as much,” replied the magician, “ and yet you saw her exactly as she appeared when in the very zenith of her beauty.”

“ Still,” said Lord Essex, “ I think her eyes may be considered fine.”

“ It must be admitted,” rejoined Sydney, “ that they are large, nobly shaped, black and sparkling, but what expression is there in them ? ”

“ Not a particle,” replied the favourite. The queen, whose face that day was as red as a turkey-cock’s, asked them what they thought of Helen’s porcelain complexion.

“ Porcelain ! ” cried Essex, “ ‘tis but common delf at the best.”

“ Perhaps,” continued the queen, “ such may have been the fashion in her time, but you must agree with me that there never could have been an age when such a pair of feet would be tolerated. I don’t dislike her dress, however, and I’m not sure whether I shall not bring it into fashion instead of those horrid hoops, so embarrassing on certain occasions to us women, and on others to you men.”

"The dress is well enough," said Essex, "but as for faces, the one we have just seen is certainly nothing to boast of." Sydney, chiming in with this remark, exclaimed :

Oh, Paris, what a fatal passion
Bore off within the walls of Troy,
A beauty of so odd a fashion!
If that exploit could cause thee joy,
Her presence brought thee evil worse
Than ever did the wooden horse
That carried in its teeming womb
The Grecian wrath and Trojan doom.

This benign criticism on the appearance and assumed defects of Helen being concluded, the queen expressed a desire to see the lovely and unfortunate Mariamne so honourably mentioned in history. The enchanter did not wait to be asked twice; but not thinking it proper to evoke a princess who had acknowledged the true God in the same unceremonious manner as he had summoned the Pagan beauty, turned himself four times to the East, three to the South, two to the West, and one to the North, and in the most civil manner, in Hebrew, said : "Mariamne, daughter of Hircan, appear, if you please, in the same attire you were wont to wear at the feast of the Tabernacles." Scarcely had he finished speaking, when the consort of Herod appeared, and advanced gravely to the centre of the gallery, where she halted exactly as the first had done. Her dress, and everything about her person, seemed to shed an air of distinction and nobility around her which inspired a certain degree of respect. Her costume bore a close resemblance to that in which the high priests of the Jews is generally represented, except that she had no beard, and instead of a tiara, in the form of a crescent, such as is usually worn by the high priests, a long gauze veil, descending from her head and attached to her girdle, trailed a long way behind her. After remaining for some time before the company, she proceeded onward, but without the slightest mark of deference to the proud Elizabeth.

"Is it possible," said the queen, as soon as she was gone, "that the celebrated Mariamne could have been such a figure

as that? Could such a tall, pale, moping doll of a thing have passed during so many centuries for a marvel of beauty?"

"I' faith," said Lord Essex, "had I been Herod, the deuce a bit would I have quarrelled with such a wild she-cat as that, for rejecting my caresses."

"Well, to my eyes," said Sydney, "I confess there was a certain touching air of languor about her, a loftiness of bearing, and a something natural, and at the same time refined, in her action."

"Pho!" replied the other, "as for her lofty bearing it was sheer impertinence; the grace and ease of manner which you admire was nothing but presumption, and to me there appeared insolence in the very contour of her person."

The queen approved all this, but principally condemned the poor princess for the contempt and aversion she had shown towards the person of her husband, and for her obstinate resistance to all his most tender entreaties, adding, that it was mighty well to say that it was because he had cut the throats of all her family; but this could be no reason for refusing him the rites of Hymen, even though he had exacted them twenty times a day; and she concluded by affirming that, for this rebellion to his wishes, Herod was perfectly justified in cutting off her head.

Hereupon, Doctor Faustus, wishing to give himself an air of universal knowledge, assured them that it was not on any such account Herod had made away with the chaste Mariamne, and that it was a mistake into which all the historians had fallen; the true reason being, that a certain Salome, sister of the king, and accursed of God, had reported to her brother that, being near the queen during a sacrifice, she had heard her praying devoutly that she might be delivered from her old cuckold of a husband. Whether or not this anecdote was believed, it appeared, at any rate, to possess the merit of novelty.

Shortly after this, the queen commanded Cleopatra to be brought before her, and that with as much hauteur as if she were summoning one of her chambermaids.

Faustus at once complied, and, for the sake of varying the entertainment, sent a little devil in a post-carriage with orders to bring the lady back with him. Perhaps, mademoiselle, you may be curious to know in what manner this courier was

dispatched. It was thus : He simply took from his head a large fur cap, which, with three strokes of his wand, he changed into the prettiest white hack in the world, he then introduced one end of his wand between its buttocks, and blowing through the other, the hack was off like a flash of lightning, and in seven minutes returned with the illustrious Cleopatra, who alighted at one end of the gallery. The queen had made up her mind that the apparition would repay her curiosity for the disappointment which the vaunted charms of all the others had caused her. We shall see how matters fared.

The Queen of Egypt had made extensive preparations for her visit, having learned from her steed the object of her journey, and the little effect produced by the lovely Helen and the unfortunate Mariamne. As soon as she made her appearance, the air of the apartment became fragrant with all the perfumes of Araby the Blest, for she had covered herself with scents, partly on account of the long time that she had been in the grave, and partly that she might go off in good odour in case her face should fail to give satisfaction when she was gone. Her bosom was considerably uncovered, and a clasp of rubies and large diamonds fastened up her petticoats high above the left knee. Every part of her person, which was not exposed, was very distinctly visible through the transparent gauze of which her dress was composed. In this light and gay attire she went through the same ceremony as her predecessors had done before her.

No sooner was her back turned than they set about pulling her person and dress to pieces. The queen screamed like a mad woman for burnt feathers to be put under her nose to cure her of the vapours which this scented mummy had given her. She considered her even less tolerable than the wife of Herod or the daughter of Leda, and laughed heartily at her for tucking up her petticoats *à la Diane* in order to show the most villainous leg in the world, adding, that she had better have worn a fur gown than such a jaunty summer dress, which exposed to the view charms that were meant to be eternally hidden.

"In good sooth," said Lord Essex, "she hath a merry figure to go in such dishabille. 'Tis true her skin is white enough for

an Egyptian, but 'tis the privilege of all sandy wenches, among whom, no doubt, she took the lead by right of years."

Sydney, who, in addition to her other defects, thought she had more preface than postscript, exclaimed,

Good lack, the thousand lies behold
That lying history hath told ;
Who would believe that had not seen
Such was the great Egyptian queen,
For whom a world was thrown away
By the triumvir on the wave,
That to his rival Cæsar gave
Rome as the guerdon of the fray ?
Mark Antony, thou hadst been wise
In seeing her to close thine eyes,
Which, sooth to say, were little worth,
Empire and power to sacrifice
For this the veriest ape on earth.

" You may call her an ape as much as you will," said the doctor. " This is she nevertheless who held in thraldom the hero who conquered the world ; and 'tis this same ape who turned the head of the other hero whose name you have just mentioned. But, madam," said he to the queen, " since these famous foreigners are not to your taste, let us have none except from your own dominions. England, which at all times has been able to produce the most perfect beauties, as indeed we have proof before us in the person of your majesty, may probably furnish us with an object worthy your attention in the apparition of the fair and hapless Rosamond. Your Majesty, who knows everything, cannot be ignorant of her history."

" I have some faint notion of it," replied the queen, " but my important occupations have almost effaced it from my memory, and I should not be sorry to have it refreshed by a slight sketch of her adventures."

" It is not three days since," said Sydney, " that I was reading this passage in the life of Henry II., one of your most illustrious predecessors. This great king was endowed with a most tender heart ; but on the subject of constancy he

was the least scrupulous man in the world ; nevertheless a certain Jane Shore had for many years enjoyed undisturbed possession of him, but she could never have succeeded in fixing so volatile a disposition had not the devil had a hand in it ; for in those days it was believed by every body that it was purely by witchcraft and sorcery that she had made herself loved, and was able to retain her conquest. Faustus must tell us what he thinks of this, he who is so well informed in all these innocent little chronicles. Whatever the fact may have been my Lady Jane's spell was broken in the following manner, if indeed she had ever cast one.

"The king having one day missed his way while hunting in a large forest, after turning about and about for some time, found himself on the banks of a streamlet, whose waters were sparkling and clear. Following its course a little way, he reached a portion of the streamlet where its banks suddenly widening, formed a kind of basin, set in the midst of fresh green turf, and overshadowed by thick tufts of foliage. Spots of this kind are generally the scene of some adventure, and that which befel him was to find a quantity of women's attire at the foot of one of the trees, which caused him to alight from his horse with some degree of emotion, and having advanced a few steps further, he beheld the individuals to whom the articles of dress belonged. They were two nymphs up to their necks in the stream, and who, when they beheld a man apparently making straight for them, screamed out together most lustily. The countenance of the youngest struck him at once with such admiration, that for some time he remained motionless and lost in wonder ; nor did he bestow a glance on the other, although, like a giddy thing, she had jumped out of the water and was running towards them for her clothes. Her companion, not a whit less frightened, and quite as much surprised, did not think proper, however, to follow her example. She was exceedingly embarrassed, and seeing that the king was no less so, she took courage and said to him that as everything about his appearance betokened him to be a knight, she entreated him to grant her a boon ; such being the height of good manners in those days. Accordingly the king, who had already given her his whole person, his liberty, his heart, and his soul, swore that he would refuse her nothing she

might do him the honour to ask even though it were to share his throne with her. At these words the fair one started, and had nearly risen out of the water, to make him a curtsey ; but checking this first impulse of loyalty and respect, the favour she requested of him was, that he might be pleased to retire until she was out of the water, and had resumed her attire. He obeyed her with child-like submission, although, on these occasions, he was generally adventurous ; but the poor king was already over head and ears in love, and this is quite enough to render the most determined man in the world as timid and submissive as a young maiden, when in the presence of the beloved object. Accordingly he did retire, but not with the intention of keeping his word to the letter. As soon as a few bushes concealed him, he gave his horse a smart lash with his whip, and sent him galloping about the forest ; his majesty then went down upon all fours, and creeping to the spot whence he had come, gently pulled aside the branches which concealed the stream from his eyes exactly at the very moment when the fair unknown was emerging from it without the least precaution, and quite unconscious of the roguish trick that was being practised on her by a knight errant, and one who was a king into the bargain. Heaven only knows whether the prince, who had fallen desperately in love at only seeing the tip of her nose, discovered wherewithal to add fresh fuel to the fire which consumed him, in the exhibition which now presented itself. History informs us, however, that although he was on all fours, he would willingly have remained in the same position for three whole days without eating or drinking, so delighted was he with what he saw. He was not put to the test, however ; the nymph proceeded to don her clothes, and her new-found admirer, after taking a short turn, made his appearance. The first thing he did was, to throw himself at her feet, and swear that he adored her, without taking the trouble to inquire who she was. The surprise, respect, emotion, and blushing shame of the charming stranger at this proceeding, would have made havoc with the charms of any other ; but hers only became more nuterous and more beautiful, so much so that the poor king—”

“ I pray you, sir knight,” interrupted the queen, “ be brief.”

“ As brief as your majesty pleases,” replied the knight.

"At this moment the tramp of horses was heard ; it was the king's people who had been seeking him for a long half hour, and were bringing his horse back by the bridle. He mounted him again, after learning that his new divinity was called Rosamond, and that her father was a baron, whose castle was situated within fifty yards of the forest. He retraced his steps, plunged in reverie and quite cooled in his affections toward his mistress Jane. She soon perceived a change, but this gave him no concern ; he went out a hunting more frequently, and upon every occasion returned with still less affection for her than before. This awakened her suspicions, and her suspicions set about posting spies on the king's path in every direction. One of these informed her that the king had been seen on both his knees before a young person who was as beautiful as an angel, on the day that he had lost himself in the wood ; and that ever since, when he had gone out a hunting, this was the game he had had in view. Upon this discovery, my Lady Jane, who, with all submission to your majesty, was the most spiteful harridan in the world, fumed and blazed like a fury, and fell to abusing the king as though he were one of her varlets, and as she possessed a diabolical ascendancy over his mind, she obliged him, by her threats and riotous behaviour, to carry off poor Rosamond, and shut her up in an old castle in the midst of a wilderness, which, to this day, is called Rosamond's castle. It was in this prison, that at the end of a few years, the detestable Jane Shore caused her rival to be strangled during the king's absence on a voyage to France."

"A most deplorable end, indeed," said the queen.

"But the saddest part of the story is," said the enchanter, "that she was carried off and died without the king's having an opportunity of bringing his adventure, so promising in the commencement, to any more satisfactory end."

The good queen, after a slight shake of her head and a smile of incredulity, testified great impatience to behold her whose history had been briefly related.

"There is a secret sympathy," said Faustus, "in this eagerness ; for, according to tradition and certain ancient chronicles, Fair Rosamond had much of your majesty's aspect, and resembled you in features, though of course it was an ugly likeness."

"Let us see her," said the queen, "and as soon as she appears, Sir Philip Sydney, I command you to examine her carefully, in order that if we deem her worthy of the trouble, you may make an exact description of her."

When this command had been given, and the doctor had gone through certain little conjurations, the place where she was buried not being more than thirty leagues from London, after a short lapse, the fair one appeared. As soon as they saw her from the end of the gallery, her figure and appearance pleased them extremely, and when she was near enough to be closely inspected, the approbation of the company was evinced by a certain air of pleasure and admiration, which animated all on beholding her; and every one appeared secretly to approve the taste of Henry II., while they execrated the negligence through which her life had been sacrificed. The doctor had bestowed no other dress on her than what she had worn on quitting the bath; it consisted of a plain mob cap, the strings tied in a bow over her head, a morning gown of taffeta, and a rather short petticoat of yellow linen, simply embroidered with silk. Nevertheless, in this attire she appeared, in the eyes of the spectators, to eclipse the brightness of day. She halted much longer before them than the others had done, and as though aware of the commands which Sydney had received, she turned her head twice or thrice towards him, and gazed on him with tender expression. Any one would have thought that his heart was melting within him, to see the piteous and woe-begone figure he made. At last she was obliged to take leave of the company, and as soon as she was out of sight, the queen exclaimed,

"Gracious heavens; what a charming creature! I never saw any one who pleased me so much. What a shape! what unaffected dignity of manner! how brilliant, and yet how free from artifice! And can any one say that I resemble her! What say you, my lord?"

My lord was at that moment so wrapt in his own reflections, that at first he did not answer her aloud; but said aside to himself, "Would to heaven, Bess, my queen and mistress, that thou didst. I would give the best horse in my stable wert thou but an ugly likeness of her!" Then turning to her, he said aloud, "Resemble her! your majesty has but to walk round

the gallery in a loose morning gown and an embroidered petticoat, and write me down a coxcomb if the conjuror himself could tell the difference."

During all these stale and wretched compliments wherewith the favourite was wont to flatter the vanity of the good queen, the poet Sydney, pencil in hand, was proceeding with his likeness of the fair Rosamond. As soon as he had completed the last stroke, he was commanded to read it out, and thus began :

Verse, at my queen's command obey,
 And with your brightest pencil trace
 The beauties of that form and face,
 Round which a thousand graces play ;
 To praise such beauties sure belong
 To Dan Apollo—God of Song,
 No need of fiction for the task ;
 We limn no shell, we paint no mask,
 But with a faithful hand we draw
 A wonder without spot or flaw,
 That doth all ornament reject,
 By nature's hand alone bedeck't.
 In tracing it we need alone,
 To make the lovely portrait known,
 Employ truth's pencil and 'twill rise
 A marvel to our loving eyes.

This is spoken like an honest man, and one that for a spinner of verse, and scribbler of romances, has some conscience. Thus does he pursue in detail his description of her charms :—

A multitude of witching charms
 Her youth for love and conquest arms ;
 They sparkle in her glancing eye,
 Upon her ruby lip they glow,
 Her cheeks the blushing roses dye,
 The paler lily lurks below,
 And every choicer bud or flower
 Yields her its beauty and perfume.
 While on her graceful form they shower
 A second world of love and bloom.

Within her lips of coral red,
A range of little pearls is spread.
Happy, thrice happy he whom fate
Permits to touch them with his own,
And after sighs interminate
May hope to make them his alone.
Her eye's seductive flash and fire,
The coldest heart might well inspire,
On which its burning glances fell.
She boasts of Hebe's heavenly nose,
Her robes her little feet disclose,
But hide the rest they veil so well;
One could but dream of what lay hidden,
Such fancies being not forbidden.
In all her figure as it moved,
A certain royal beauty shone,
Royal, yet made to be beloved.
In short, fair Daphne, charming maid,
It was yourself whom he portray'd.

Or at least, I could have sworn as much, so exactly does the description fit you, except with respect to the bosom, which the painter has forgotten; and certainly if any one should take the liberty of painting your portrait, this is not an item he would be likely to suppress. The peculiar form, the dazzling lustre, and particular position which nature has bestowed on the little which you reveal, would inspire one with a number of sufficiently agreeable ideas, whether for prose or verse, and that without using the slightest exaggeration, in order to render the matter more touching. I am not much better satisfied with what he says concerning the mouth of his original. One would think it belonged to some sybil, so fearful is he of touching it. He certainly is right when he says that it is made to match the most beautiful teeth in the world, and although this is something, yet it is not enough; and could he but have beheld yours he would have depicted, in graceful verses, your fresh vermillion lips; and he would have said that around those lips heaven had grouped certain charms, which it has forgotten or has not cared to bestow on others.

But let us return to our gallery, where a council was being

held, as to the apparition which was to succeed that of Rosamond. The enchanter was of opinion that in future they should not go out of England in search of renowned beauties, and proposed the celebrated Countess of Salisbury, who gave rise to the Order of the Garter, in like manner as a certain Flemish beauty had occasioned that of the Golden Fleece. The proposal was approved of, but the queen insisted, before they went any further, on seeing once more her beloved Rosamond. The doctor stoutly and sternly combated the request, asserting that the thing was scarcely practicable, according to the usages of conjuration, and that, moreover, the retrogression of phantoms was irritating in the extreme to the powers subject to his incantations. But he argued in vain; it was imagined that he only made all these objections to increase his value, and the queen spoke to him in so imperative a tone that he was obliged to comply. He assured her, however, that if Rosamond did return, it would neither be through the door by which she had entered, nor that by which she had departed, on her first appearance, and warned every one to take care of himself, for he would not answer for the consequences. The queen, as we have already observed, knew not the sensation of fear, and our two gentlemen-in-waiting were by this time sufficiently hardened to supernatural appearances, so that the doctor's words gave them no alarm.

Meanwhile, he had already commenced operations. Never had conjuration cost him so much trouble; for, after muttering a considerable time, and making a number of contortions, which were neither decent nor civil, he threw his book on the ground, and began to hop round it on one leg; after which he stood with his head down and his legs up in the air in the shape of a gibbet; but seeing that nothing came of this, he had recourse to his last and most powerful incantation, which was to take three leaps backward, with the little finger of the right hand in the left ear, and give himself three slaps on the buttocks, crying out three times, as loud as he could shout, "Rosamond!"

At the last of these magical slaps, a sudden gust of wind burst open a large window, through which Rosamond stepped into the middle of the gallery, as though she were stepping out

of her carriage. The doctor was drowned in perspiration ; and while he was wiping himself, the queen, who found her incomparably more amiable this time than the last, forgot her usual self-control in her eagerness to welcome her, and rushed out of the circle with open arms, exclaiming, " Ah ! dearest Rosamond !" As soon as the words had escaped her lips, a violent clap of thunder shook the whole palace ; a thick black vapour filled the gallery, and several little new-born flashes of lightning began to dart about right and left in a zig-zag course, and made the spectators tremble with fright. When the darkness was at last gradually dissipated, the magician Faustus was seen sprawling on the ground, foaming like a wild boar, with his cap on one side, his wand on the other, and his magical Alcoran between his legs. Not a person present at this adventure but brought away something more than his fright.

The flashes of lightning became more frequent and vivid, and one of them carried off Lord Essex's right eye-brow, and Sydney's left moustache. Whether the queen lost anything is not known, but the memoirs inform us that her frill-collar smelt so terribly of tinder, and the lower part of her hoop-dress of sulphur, that it was impossible to approach her. As you may imagine, charming Daphne, after experiencing such a rout, our inquisitive friends put off their desire to behold the Countess of Essex to another day ; and, indeed, in the memoirs of Sydney, the subject is never mentioned again. For my own part I hope that this long rhapsody will have so wearied you, that you will never again take it into your head to invite me to discredit myself by a return to this kind of writing :

Thus in our woods a shepherd sung,
As on the grass his form he flung
Beside a stream that rippled fast,
The flowery banks and meadows past.

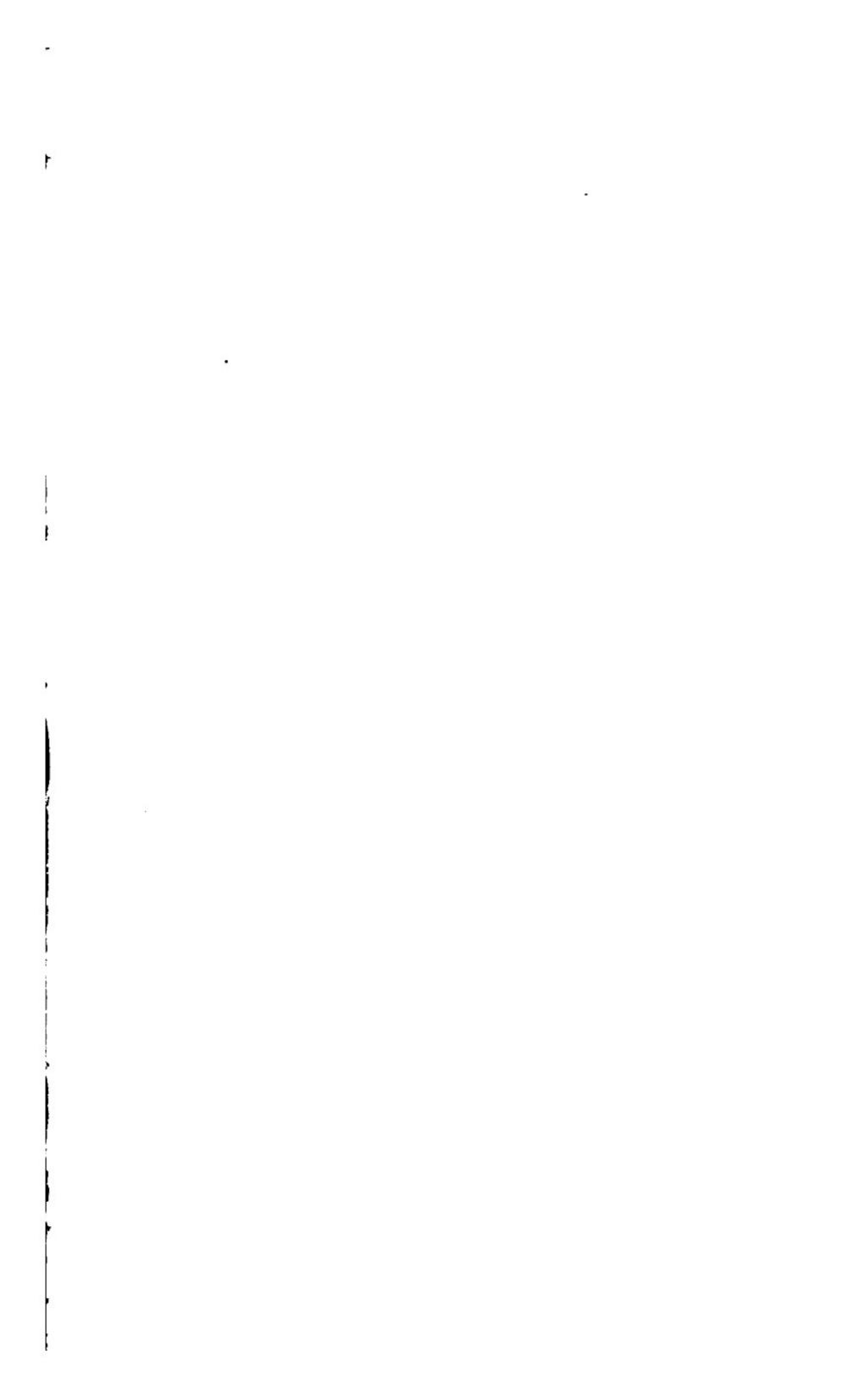
Absorb'd in deepest reveries,
To life's dull facts new phases giving,
And in his idle music weaving
Dreams with mere realities.

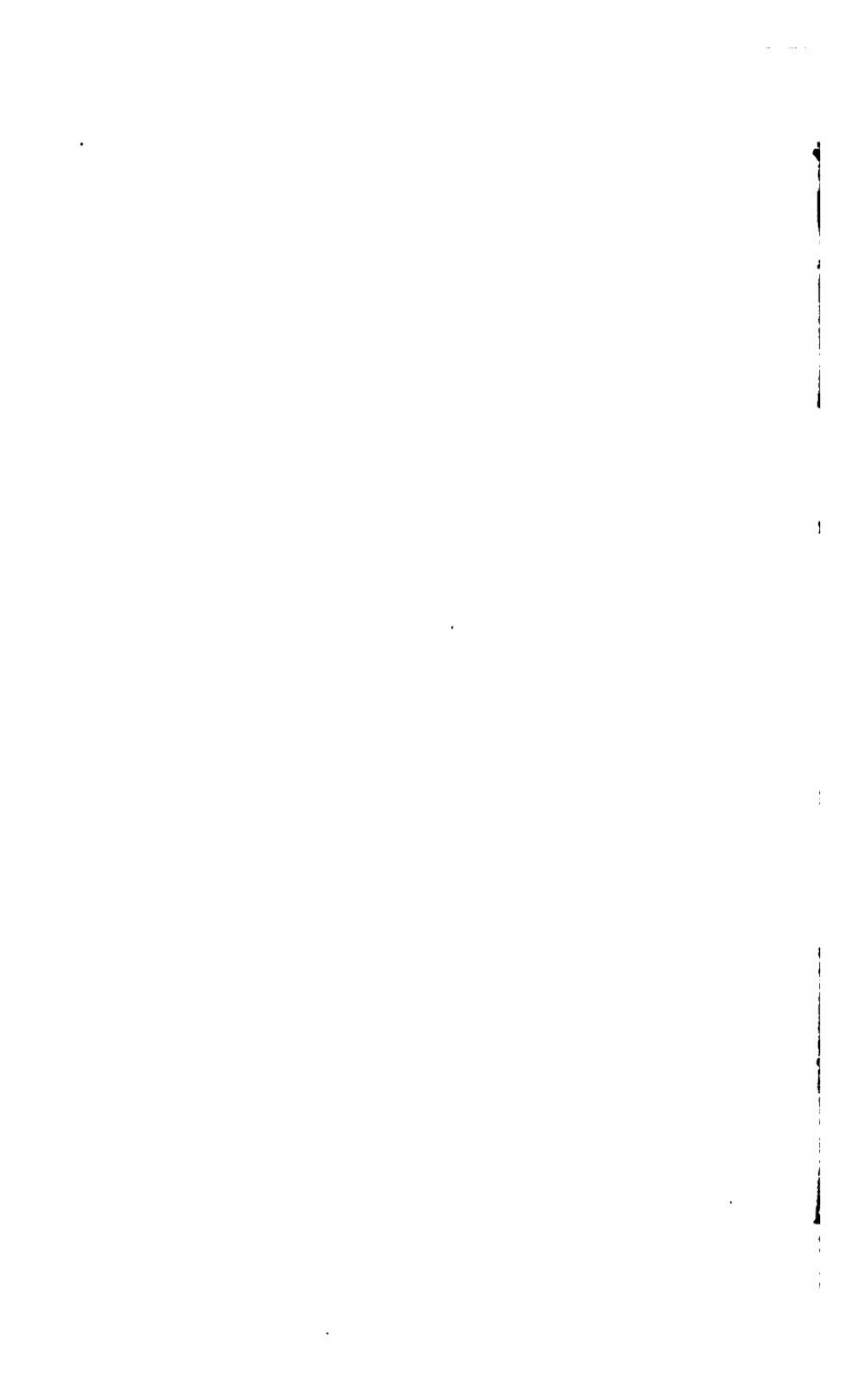
But now the song which once was heard,
Gay as some glad and warbling bird,
When first he loved to sing,
Has tamed its voice and checked its tongue,
As birds that have in summer sung,
In winter take the wing.
Alas ! the spell is gone for ever,
Farewell banks of happy river,
Where oft to your melodious flow
I piped my mirth and sung my woe.
Again, I say, farewell for ever,
Farewell banks of happy river.

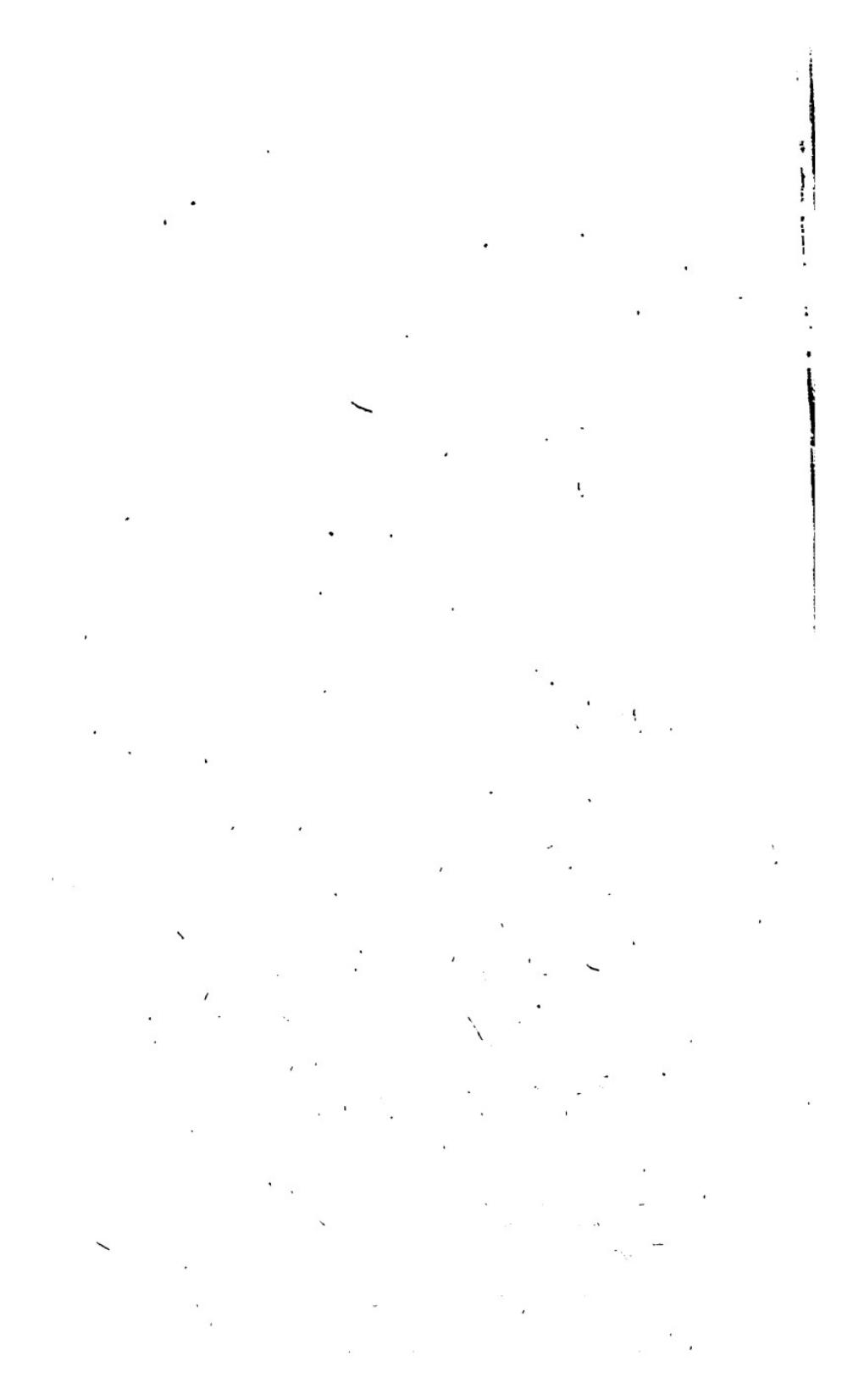
THE END.

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